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VAGRANCY ACTS

BY

A. C. McM.

25TH MARCH 1875.

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SECUNDERABAD,

25TH MARCH, 1875.

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VAGRANCY ACTS.

THE BIRDS WE SEE IN OUR RIDES ABOUT OOTACAMUND.

Passing over the "sparrow," the carrion crow" (it must be remembered that the smaller crow, with ashy grey neck and breast, of every Indian city, village, or camp, has not yet found his way up the ghauts), and the "myna" of everyday life in the plains, the first bird that attracts our attention is the red-whiskered "bul-bul," which, with black head and crest, crimson whiskers, light hair-brown plumage, is cheerily chirrupping on the hideous tuft of a wild tobacco plant. Then, hunting for small insects on the small shrubs or the grassy bank of the garden is a busy little bird, which at first sight we take for an unusually well-dressed cock sparrow; until, finding that he is bluish grey and less rakish-looking than our familiar friend, we give him up as some "little bird"—the shortest way of solving any difficulty as to name. He is, however, the Indian grey tit, a very useful friend to gardeners, and, one cousin excepted, the only representative of the Titmouse family to be found in Southern India.

Then, clinging to those flower stalks, and twittering all the time, are six or eight lively looking little green creatures, with a minute ring of white feathers round the eye. They are the "white-eyed flower pecker," hunting busily for insects and larvæ on the bark of shrubs and in the cups of flowers—next, but so small (entire length being only four inches, active and fidgetty as any insect himself, and when still generally hanging head downwards, in which uncomfortable position he looks more like a leaf than a bird), that you can hardly see him, is the little olive-colored "Neilgherry flower-pecker," also insect hunting as busily as he can. Further, always alone—keeping a keen look-out withal, let us hope for some insect, but perhaps with evil intent on a young or weakly member of the last-mentioned species—is the Butcher Bird, or "rufous-backed shirke"—a handsome bird, less known than he should be. Then on almost every bank we see the "black robin;" black, when seated, but pied during flight, as then a white band on the wings, back and upper tail coverts, comes into view. His habits well entitle him to rank with our dear old friend of childhood, and he builds in the same way; but, probably because he has better materials at hand, a much neater nest, beautifully concealed with green moss in a way that would puzzle the detective powers of any one except an English school-boy, or a lover of natural history. We know of one nest on the road-side, out of which the parent bird pops right into the face of almost every passer-by, yet in which, we will wager our remaining fortune in gloves, she will rear her family in perfect safety. Her husband is seated on the top of a bush hard by, singing pleasantly, but keeping a sharp look-out for any insect on the ground, and very seldom failing to secure one when he makes a sudden dart from his perch. Then, well above us, while his mate has her nest and dusky-looking eggs to attend to, under that tuft of grass, is a "skylark," very nearly the same as our home lavrock. Do not flatter yourself, however, that he belongs exclusively to Ootacamund. Jerdon writes that "comparatively few residents in India are aware that a skylark is common in almost every

part of India, and when they go to a hill station, observe this bird, perhaps for the first time, with equal surprise and delight." This is very true; they may be heard on almost every antelope plain in India, and even sometimes from the "Island" of Madras. Not the less charming is the song, however.

No! those are not mice, nor anything "tiresome" or "horrid" that are running so actively across the path; they are only a bevy of the handsome "painted bush quail," which you will not get in the plains. There, is a Neilgherry blackbird, very similar to the European bird, and with exactly the same habits; and, unless you are too prejudiced to enjoy anything in India, you must allow that the song is very nearly as delightful as is that of the English bird. Seated on a rock in the valley below, always in the shade, there should be a "blue rock thrush," a very handsome bird, so solitary in its habits as to be supposed by some to be the "sparrow" of the Scriptures, that sitteth alone on the house-top. Solitary though it be, it is the tamest and most confiding bird we have seen; in some parts of the country entering not only the verandahs, but the inner rooms of houses, and being almost startling in its noiseless and *uncanny* familiarity. So fearless is it, that it might almost be handled. We saw one in our verandah at Rangoon kill and swallow a large scorpion; so they are of use too! You will have some difficulty in seeing the Neilgherry laughing thrush, a handsome rufous-colored bird, with dark head and a large white mark over each eye, whose call is to be heard in almost every copse and clump of thick brushwood; for, on being watched, he will hop and climb up the thickest parts of the foliage near him, keeping always the stems between himself and the observer. We have found the nest beautifully made of moss, lined with feathers, and concealed in a whin bush, in a way that would puzzle most school-boys.

Those handsome birds with deep red bills—that are such a noise about the tops of the trees—are not "but "Neilgherry black bul-buls." They appear to be constantly on the move, and always ready to interfere with their comrades

even in flight from one tree to another; in fact, they are, as a Scotch doctor of our acquaintance observed of an Irish fellow-medico—"both vivacious and pugnacious." They are difficult to observe attentively, as they always keep about dense woods and to the tops of trees. A very beautiful bright green bird, shy and solitary—often to be seen perched on high trees about the lower side of thick woods—is the large "blue-necked bee-eater." He is said to be difficult of approach: perhaps it is so; but, as each time we have seen him we have been without our gun, we cannot give further evidence on the subject than that, if we had one, we should have backed ourselves to slay him. He is a near relation of the beautiful little green bird, the "common bee-eater," that may be seen anywhere in India in dozens, along the telegraph wires by the railway that will take you to the plains, or sailing about with its burnished wings glittering in the sunbeams. This reminds us that our leave is nearly up; we shall soon see them again. Alas!

Another gaily-tinted green bird is the "green barbet"—that with stout beak, robust figure, and short tail and wings, shows himself much more freely than does his pretty little crimson-breasted brother, often called "the copper-smith," whose loud and somewhat metallic note—"took—took—took" is to be heard any day at almost every station throughout India, but who, although the lovely bird is very familiar—delighting much in gardens and avenues—is not often seen. The fact is, our loud-voiced little friend, like many other birds—the laughing thrush just mentioned to wit—appears to be a ventriloquist, and out of sheer mischief to misguide any one who is looking for him.

The "hoopoe," with his large crest, long curved beak, and quaintly banded plumage, is occasionally to be seen; but here we are at the lake again, in which there is a colony of dab-chicks, or little "grebes," if you like the name better (are not grebe feathers sometimes worn in hats?) Now these are short-winged birds of feeble flight, and the question how they got into this lake has puzzled many men. Did they grow there?

Or did some one bring a tub with a pair of them diving about in it up from the plains? Or did they ever fly so high that they hit on the Willowbund? Certain it is that they did not swim, neither could they have walked—the odds are that they did not fly up any of these hills. They appear very happy, however, for there, within thirty yards of the road, is a floating mass of reeds and grass, on which we will wager at least one pair have established a nursery. Lastly, close to the edge of the water, you can hear the call of a snipe; what he is doing here, instead of in Northern Europe or Asia, where he should be in May, it is hard to tell. It would be interesting to know if he intends to set up his nest for this season here.

And now, before we say good night, remember that in this merry month of May all the birds on these beautiful hills are breeding; slay them at the proper time, when and how you like; being shot is the natural death of any bird; but spare them during the breeding season, for each hen bird you kill now you destroy either a nest of eggs, or, worse still, of young ones.

VAGRANT.

[We very much thank our correspondent for his two interesting communications on "Birds of the Period." We are sorry to find that he is about to "migrate;" but trust that, in due "season," he will return.—ED. "S. I. O."]

"I HAVE NEVER SEEN ANY PRETTY BIRDS ON THE HILLS."

You do not think that there are any pretty birds on the Hills? All you have seen are stupid looking things, with dull and sombre colors? Lovely lady, is it possible that, with eyes capable, as we know to our cost, of damaging the masculine heart at the utmost range of the best rifle in Allamby's shop, you have neglected to make use of them now and then upon feathered

You believe that all men are color-blind? Not all of us ; therefore even wanderers and vagrants are sometimes able to appreciate beauty. However, let us turn our horses down past Sylk's, visit the pic-nicing spot beyond the Toda-mund, and then home by the path at the back of the Club ; and as I have Jerdon's book of birds pretty nearly by heart, I shall, I hope, be able to quote from him some descriptions of colors that may convince you that there are pretty birds on the hills. In that garden to the right I have seen the pretty little "*White tailed Robin Fly-catcher*," with manners and appearance very like those of our own dear little British Robin ; the more so, that in spring the male assumes a bright orange rufous tinge on his chin, throat and part of his breast. Anywhere from those rhododendrons behind the Toda-mund you will find the "*Neilgherry blue Fly-catcher*," a fidgetty, wide-awake little bird, so constantly on the move, and generally on the farther side of a tree, that you will have some difficulty in seeing that he is, as Jerdon says, of a deep indigo-blue color, inclining to lazuline on the head and shoulders ; with wings and tail black, and whitish below : not an ugly combination of colours, is it ? He has several very pretty cousins up on these hills ; two of them are often to be seen in that enclosure with the old gate-way on our left. *You are afraid to go there ! there is a tiger-trap somewhere near ?* Yes ! but that is the very reason why you should not see a tiger there. *What is that noise ?* Certainly not a tiger : it is only the "hammer, hammer," of a woodpecker, probably the "*Golden-backed Woodpecker* ;" a very fine bird, that I have seen at the Avalanche, and that is doubtless here ; although I must own that I have never seen him in Ootacamund. He has a crimson head and crest, upper back and outer part of wings golden yellow ; lower part of back shining carmine red ; the rest of his colors, being white, mottled black, and rusty brown, serve to make up a most attractive whole.

But to return to our Fly-catchers. In the thickest part of that wood, I have often seen the "*Black and Orange Fly-catcher*" a shy, silent, unsociable little bird, which has hitherto, so Jerdon says, been found only on the summits of the Neilgherries and the highest mountains of Ceylon. It has the head, neck, and wings black, and the rest of the body bright orange. On the trees near this path I have seen the "*Verditer Fly-catcher*:" color bright verditer blue: and here too, I have seen.—but there are a couple of them, so judge for yourself if they are not worth looking at. *Yes, they are certainly most lovely little birds.* They are a pair of the "*Velvet-fronted blue Nut-hatches*;" and as Jerdon writes of their colors, are of a fine cerulean blue above, with a tinge of lilac on the head; velvet black foreheads; blackish wings, edged with blue; beneath delicate lilac brownish: with white chins and throats, and bright coral-red bills. I agree with you that they are horribly tiresome; perfect little acrobats of birds, that won't keep quiet for a second to allow you to examine their beauty; for they run round and round, up and down, above or on the lower sides of the horizontal branches, and prefer going with their heads down and their feet in the air to the positions taken by discreet birds in general. There are most useful little creatures notwithstanding; for they are always on the look out in the bark of a tree for small insects, their eggs, or larvæ; and I have seen them, in company with the small white-eyed tit and the handsome grey tit I mentioned once before, thus hunting, in a way that should delight any sufferer from the coffee borer. You would like one for your hat would you not? I shall see what I can do; but, *entre nous*, Mrs. V., although a most excellent woman, has such an aversion to my being in the least degree attentive to any lady in the prime of life,—which in your charming sex we know extends from sixteen to sixty years,—that if I succeed I trust you will not mention how you got the feathers. Now; let us turn down by the Club. *You don't like it?* Never mind; there are not many people in it at this season.

and after all, as Ootacamund increase in importance, the front of our Club will be doubtless, just as favorite a place for ladies to meet and talk and be talked to while they are waiting for their lords who are pool-playing, or newspaper-studying inside as the fronts of other Clubs are. Do you see those hideous tall trees on the right? Australians, of some very valuable kind I believe they are, and that they grow with marvellous rapidity to some height that must nearly put one's neck out of joint to look to the top of them. In those trees you will often see the "*Small Barbets*,"—pretty grass-green birds, stoutly made, and, like many other short and stout bipeds, exceedingly noisy. Near this spot too I think I have seen the "*Bright green-tree Warbler*," a very pretty little specimen of its kind, being lively green above, unsullied yellow below. On that oak tree between the Club and the bungalow, I have often seen the "*Large Purple Honey-Sucker*," a giant among his relations, for he is no less than five-and-a-half inches long, or fully three quarters as large as a sparrow. Jerdon writes that he is above brilliantly glossed with metallic green and purple, brownish black below, wings and tail black, glossed with purple, throat and breast rich purple, with a tuft of crimson and yellow feathers close to his shoulders. When you go down to those Fancy Balls at Madras, look out about two miles after you pass Coonoor, and you will, perhaps, see the most lovely of the honey-suckers, or sun-birds, which are, perhaps, the most beautiful in India, where they take the place held by the humming-birds of the west. The "*Tiny Honey-Sucker*," as Jerdon calls it, has a head and neck fine metallic green; back and shoulders rich, bright, sanguine red; throat, neck, and some other parts, fine violet with amethystine gloss; wings and tail dark brown, and lower parts yellow: beautiful enough even for *your* hat.

On that ghat you will see several very lovely birds; among others, the "*Black-naped Blue Fly-Catcher*," the "*Green Bul-Bul*," olive green above, bright yellow below; and the gay looking "*Minivets*" or flame-birds, of which the gentlemen wear

the clothing which corresponds with our coats,—glossy blue black; and their wings, which take the place of our legs, gleam in orange red,—a costume which a friend of mine thinks of adopting at the next Fancy Ball he appears at. In Goomsoor there is a somewhat larger and even more brilliantly tinted “Minivet” or flame bird, so beautiful that even the mild Hindoo, the most unromantic of all men, gives it, according to Jerdon, a name which signifies “the beloved of seven damsels!” A pretty notion is it not? Natives seem rather fond of the number seven, but I do not for a moment suppose that they have yet advanced enough in civilization to appreciate Rory O’Moore’s sentiments regarding there “being luck in odd numbers.” One of the babbling thrushes is called by them the seven sisters or brothers,—I forget which. That little bird on the stone over the water is a Shrike or Butcher-bird; the one in this Club enclosure (at least, I have never observed the the habit elsewhere,) often takes to fishing for small frogs, much as a king-fisher catches his prey. There, twittering on the “Woodside” fence, is a sharp looking, bright little fellow, called the “*Red-whiskered or jocose Bul-bul*,” rightly named too, for he appears always to be in good spirits and ready to take an interest in any amusement that is going on. Carefully watching the muddy puddle at the foot of the Club ground, I have seen the little Kingfisher so brilliant and bright in his various and glittering tints of metallic green, blue and reddish that he almost dazzles one as he flashes past under an Indian sun. Lovely as he is, he is one of the most common of our Indian birds, and wherever there is water, in any wet paddy field, over a garden well, on a post or stone beside a ditch, he may be seen looking out for his prey. There are always some of them to be met with about the little lake on this side of Craigmore. Close to the “Willowbund,” I have seen his larger and even still more gorgeously-tinted brother, the “*White breasted King-fisher*.” Chinamen value the skins and feathers of king-fishers most highly for their fans. In the Chinese Joss

house (or temple, or church, or whatever the proper term for a place of worship may be) at Rangoon, I have seen many hundreds of king-fishers' skins prepared for exportation to China. Chinese clergymen seem to have very high-church sentiments in matters relating to the embellishment of their places of worship, but on this occasion they appeared to take a very practical view of the subject, and to consider that the church being dry, and free from rats and insects, made an excellent store house. It is said by the Burmans that the Chinese give a very high price for these skins and those of the "*Rolle*," or, as people insist upon mis-calling it, the "*Blue Jay*." You like feather fans? Very pretty ones can be made out of the wings of the painted snipe, and still prettier from those of the Floriken; so get the proper man in the plains to shoot some of each for you. Talking of the plains, it is very odd, how carefully these hills are avoided by the common little grey crow or the "*Splendid Crow*" as naturalists call it.—Yes. *all naturalists are very stupid, absurd and uninteresting*;—but to return to the little grey crows: they come to within a mile of Kullar at the foot of the ghat, but although there are plenty of them up to that spot, and they abound at Metopollium, they must be afraid of fever, for I have never seen them at Kullar itself, and know that they do not come up the ghat: for I have a bet with one of the cleverest men—Yes, *I know he is clever, for he is one of the best waltzers on the hills*;—that he cannot find a grey crow anywhere up the Coonoor ghat; and although he has tried for a year, he has not succeeded. I wonder whether the large crows that bother us so much now, grew here from the beginning, like the Todas and the black-birds; or whither they came up in attendance on the first mutton-butcher who made his way from the plains. Did sparrows grow here originally? There are plenty now in every house, but I believe that they are not to be found on the Pulneys, however these are not pretty birds; so we shall return to our former subject. I have in the Katie Valley, seen flocks of the pretty little red "*Wax Bill*" or "*Amadaval*,"

"Amadavat" as people generally call it. He is a near relation of the sparrow family, and now as we are near the church, I may tell you an ecclesiastical story. There is, in the plains, a somewhat rufus-colored starling, not quite so large as a thrush or myna, which, in showing to a lady, I called by the most common name "*Ciclum bird*." and happened to remark that it was pretty, but she did not agree with me. A few days after, I brought her another; but this time gave it the proper name, used by ornithologists—"Rosy Pastor." She at once declared that it was a lovely little thing. Could the change of name have at all influenced her judgment as to its beauty?

There is one of the little "*Grey and Yellow Wagtails*." Surely they are pretty birds. They are very like men in some respects, for they alter the colors of their garments constantly, and with all grades of age and changes of season. Not very long ago, nor far from this, I saw a very prettily plumaged bird, that had been (as this species appears often to be) obliged to take refuge in a house from the strong wind. It was the "*Yellow breasted Ground Thrush*," a bird of very feeble flight but exceedingly varied colors—olive, black, blue, green, pale blue, azure blue, white, isabelline, yellow and scarlet being blended as only nature could unite them in its little dress. There is a very fine and neat although not very handsome bird to be found about Lovedale and Bishopdown—the "*Neilgherry Thrush*," which has, Jerdon says, as yet only been found in the dense woods on the summits of the Neilgherries. It has, as he notes, a rich and most charming song, which, however, I have only once heard; and the performer, like our home thristle,—or mavis, if you like the name better, struck me as being ignorant of sore throats, and to prefer singing while rain was falling, as our English thrushes so often do on a quiet afternoon in spring. Here are Mrs. V. and the Twins coming up the hill, so I must stop my list;—but believe me, that although it is too much the fashion to cry down everything in the particular place we happen to be for the time in India, there are just as

many pretty birds to be found in India as anywhere else—and in no part of the country do I remember to have seen so many as in this delightful Ootacamund. And certainly I do not know any spot where there are more temptations in the way of climate and scenery to induce one to go forth into their haunts to look for them.

VAGRANT.

THE GAME BIRDS OF THE HILLS.

Although vagrants are generally supposed to be poachers, and although poachers are generally, and in most cases with much justice, supposed to ignore all sportsmen-like feelings, and to work merely for the poulterer or the pot, I trust you will not, O Editor, despise a notice of our game birds, from one who, however aberrant may be his tastes, is a firm believer in the right to issue, and the necessity for, game laws,—not only on these hills, but throughout all India. I shall, as the birds worth shooting occur to me, put down what may strike me; but without going through the orthodox ornithological gradation roll,—an omission that would horrify a regular naturalist, for, be it remembered, there are to him as many and as nice distinctions in the rank and positions of birds as there are among men and women; and that "*major*" or "*minuta*" "*splendens*" or "*longicaudata*," "*militaris*" or "*religiosa*," or "*anglica*" or "*indica*," are terms that with birds imply just as strict rules regarding precedence as those that guide an aide-de-camp in determining—not always to that dear matron's satisfaction.—who is to take my better-half to dinner. It is so long since I left school that I cannot feel certain of the meaning of the latin terms I have just used; but from what I do remember of that language, I think that my friend the A. D. C. would probably translate them as "*senior*" and "*junior*," "*that swell*" and "*the lady with the long train*," "*that man with the red jacket*"

and "the parson's daughter." Irregular though my list may be, I shall, of course, head it with the pride and glory of our Ootacamund sportsman, the WOODCOCK. "*Scolopax rusticola*" is the lowly name given by ornithologists to that most fascinating bird. But what matters the name? As Cinderella of the glass slippers and pretty ankles was to the gorgeous prince who pined for her, (I have forgotten his name;) as "the mighty boar" is to the Indian hog-hunter; or as the musical cry of hounds is to every one who has ever ridden to them, from dear old Sir Roger de Coverley to the school-boy of these days; —Yes, I mean what I say, fairest lady. I know what Sir Roger de Coverley is, and that even little boys like round dances and that you always sit out the square ones with your friends. But whatever the dance called after him may be, Sir Roger de Coverley was a gentleman fond of hunting, and as much admired by the *Spectator* of his days as you are by the present speaker. But to return to our birds. What any one of these allurements may have been to those I have mentioned, so is the woodcock to the gunner, let him be of the Neilgherry Hills, of Briton, or of Canada.

We all know when the woodcock comes to Ootacamund and when he leaves; but we do not very well know where our birds pass their summers, Thibet, Eastern Asia, Sekim, and the snowy ranges of the Himalayas are, probably, the places in which they picked up their earliest education. During their long flights north and south, they must often stop to rest for the day at many places *en route*; but as they are then either fast asleep or merely probing the soft soil in some damp and quiet spot, in looking out for a hurried breakfast or luncheon preparatory to another journey by night, they are very seldom seen, or if seen for a moment, are not recognised. Jerdon, at page 671 of volume 3 of his book on the "Birds of India," mentions one case of the woodcock having been obtained in the Madras Market, and says that it has been procured at Masulipatam, and at various stations in the Bengal Presidency.

It would be interesting to know the dates, or rather the season in which these birds were seen; probably in each instance a week or ten days before the bird should, in his flight to the south, have reached Ootacamund, or the same number after he had left it on his way back to spend his spring and summer with his relations in his own county or parish, or whatever the woodcockian term for a "country-side" may be. Mr. Blyth the well-known naturalist and curator of the Calcutta Museum told me that two out of four specimens he showed me, had been bought in the Calcutta Market by his collectors. It struck me at the time that the birds he pointed out as having been so procured, were finer specimens and in better plumage than the others. This, however, may be accounted for by their having been at once made over to his taxidermists. I have heard from excellent authority of a woodcock, probably exhausted by flight, or pursued by some bird of prey, having been picked up at Thayetmayo on the Irrawaddy in Burmah; and of one having been shot at Bassain in the same country. I think that (in the early part of April in both instances) I have flushed a woodcock in the hills of the Northern Districts near Goodum, in the Go'condah Zemindary, and also in Upper Burmah, among the high Karenee Hills, north-east of Shuay-gheen, on the Setang river. On one occasion I was after rebels on the next after-larvo game; so that I could not have shot the bird had I tried to do so—

"Oh! had you ever a cousin, Tom?"

And that cousin she happened to sing?"

We remember our first woodcock; now many a year ago, and in the "auld countrie." We were leaning over a white gate at the bottom of a long avenue, talking to a pretty bright-eyed cousin. A woodcock suddenly settled close to us, and ran for some yards before he concealed himself at the foot of a holly bush. We went back for a gun; pretty cousin watched our bird and acted as beater afterwards. She brought us luck; for fortunately for us, it rose like an owl, and having in some way got in the way of the shot, was bagged, and won us

glory and satisfaction than many a far more important shot has since. A woodcock often gets up in an owl-like and somewhat *dazed* manner, (I dare say you are able to guess at the meaning of the word, even if you do not understand Scotch) and appears to fly heavily. At times however, he twists and corkscrews in his flight and flashes round or through the edge of a covert; so fast that he is by no means an easy shot. I killed one not long ago, that for the first moment I took for a hawk, so rapidly and arrow-like did he dart out of a thick wood or "*shola*,"—a word in some unknown tongue, which I am told means a wood, or covert, or copse, and which is used by many dwellers on these hills in preference to a British term. There is not much in a name however, so let that pass.

Cock almost always rise singly, and more than one is not often to be found in the same wood; but like all other creatures, wild or tame, they know very well the value of good quarters, and if one cock is killed out of a favorite covert, a second will, very probably, ere long succeed to his rather perilous inheritance.

Francis Buckland, however, tells us in his charming "*Curiosities of Natural History*,"—a work which must delight anyone, whether fond of natural history or not,—that the famous sculptor, Sir Francis Chantry, had once the luck to kill two woodcocks at the same shot. He took them home and immortalized them by making a beautiful carving of them in marble. Francis Buckland, found the following lines upon this incident among his father's papers:—

"Two woodcocks at one shot—
How rare and blest the lot,
United thus to die;
Thus, both of male and mate,
How glorious is the fate,
To wing their way to immortality.
The carver's knife in vain their limbs shall sever
In Chantry's Marble they unite for ever."

"By Chantry's gun, both seem to
chisel gives them

Is it not pleasant, O! Editor, for a sportsman to remember that Chantry, Landseer, and Leech, men whose exquisite taste and judgment in what was beautiful in nature no one can dispute, were fond of field sports?

Birds of prey appear to appreciate this delicious bird. Not long since, when I was out with a friend, we saw a very beautiful flight of some small hawk;—I think the "*Terra Sparrow-hawk*." Vol. 1, Page 52 of Jerdon's Birds,—after a woodcock, which our beaters and dogs had put up. Pursued and pursuer seemed pretty equally matched in speed, but the latter would probably have worked his wicked will, had not my friend, urged by prompt feelings of humanity, preserved the woodcock from a violent death by firing at the sparrow-hawk. The pursued then took shelter in a covert, whence, in gratitude to its preserver, it presently issued to die by his gun a natural death. Being neatly and in a workmanlike way shot, is, I maintain, a natural death for any wild creature that should not come to the more glorious fate of being ridden after;—our British fox, or the wild boar of India for example.

We know that the females of birds of prey are larger and stronger than the males, and think we can account for this by their having to capture so much more during the nursing season. Females of all falcons are more bold and fleet in pursuit, therefore of greater value when tamed for that "*gentle craft*" than the males. But for some inscrutable law of nature, the female woodcock is also much larger than her husband, and thus an idea has sprung up that there are two varieties of woodcock, a large and a small. In some counties at Home, the keepers stoutly affirm that the small woodcocks come before the large. They are probably right, the reason being that the ladies have, before changing their quarters for the season, remained behind to pack up and to see the children fairly settled; or, perhaps, are weaker after all their nursery troubles than their husbands, and therefore travel by more easy stages.

The same rule holds good with the florikin, the glory the game birds of the plains. With them the female is much larger than the male, and as Jerdon remarks, the cock birds come in first; or as he has it (Vol. 3, Page 624):—"Soon after incubation has fairly commenced, the cock birds appear to leave the breeding district, and gradually migrate southwards." I had a notable instance of this only a few weeks ago. Out of nearly fifty florikin I shot during December and the first few days of January, fourteen out of the first seventeen birds were cocks; gradually the larger females came in, and I think that at the end the sexes were pretty nearly equal in numbers.

However, enough for the present. I promise not to devote so much space to the other game birds of these hills, dear Editor. so do not be angry this time with me for having taken up so much space in your paper. Like the polite Frenchmen, "if I had more time I should write a shorter letter:" but you must make allowance for the habits of a

VAGRANT.

THE WOOD OR SOLITARY SNIPE,

After the Woodcock, the *Wood or Solitary Snipe* is perhaps entitled to the highest post of honor among the birds sought for by a sportsman on the Neilgherries. This fine bird, in its selection of haunts, in its nocturnal habits, large eyes, dark soft plumage, heavy owl-like flight and large expanse of wing, so much resembles the woodcock that it is not unfrequently taken for its more honored relative. Not long ago, I killed one that got up at the edge of a small swampy copse in so woodcock-like a manner, and looked so large on the wing, that, until I saw it fall, I flattered myself it was the more highly-prized bird. Jerdon at Page 672, Vol. 3 of his book on Indian Ornithology, gives the weight of the solitary snipe as $5\frac{1}{4}$ to 7 ozs.,

but adds that "one from the Neilgherries is recorded in the "Bengal Sporting Magazine for 1833, as having 13½ ozs. Was "it not a Woodcock?" The two birds are probably often confounded by young sportsmen, or careless observers; but, if there can be a doubt, let the beautiful silvery-white feathers below the tail of the woodcock be looked for. In the solitary snipe the lower tail coverts are barred brownish red and white, the latter more or less ashy.

Jerdon writes, "The Solitary Snipe, or Wood Snipe, is "found in the Himalays, the Neilgherries, Coorg, and occasionally in Wynaad and other elevated regions of Southern India "and Ceylon; it is also said to occur in considerable numbers "in the Saharunpoor district, below Hurdwar, and generally "in the extensive swamps at the foot of the Himalays." I have myself, on two occasions, killed solitary snipe near Russelcondah in Goomsoor, both times during the cold season. The birds had then probably taken up their winter quarters there and were not merely stopping to rest for the day during their journey to Ootacamund or the Pulneys. I also saw one that had been killed within a few miles of Rangoon, early in the snipe season, either in the end of August or beginning of September; so that bird might have been stopped in its migratory passage to some favored mountains. Oh! you lucky people of Ootacamund! how much you should value your exhilarating climate and your glorious scenery! Talk of sea breezes! As I write I am in perfection of a sea breeze, on what is said to be a cool spot on the Western Coast; and I am too hot to grumble or to do more than wish myself anywhere between Coonoor and the Kundahs.

Perhaps it may interest "Hawkeye" or "Smooth-Bore" to know that I killed a solitary snipe on the Neilgherries, with the top of the head *brown—not black*, and in many other respects more like "*gallinago solitaria*," the *Himalayan Solitary Snipe*, (No. 869, page 673, of Vol. 3 of Jerdon,) than the one

which is, he says, to be found in the Neilgherries. Could my bird, shot on these hills, have been the Himalayan Solitary Snipe? Jerdon's says that no details of its peculiar haunts are recorded, and that it has hitherto only been found on the Himalayas.

I have heard it disputed whether the Solitary Snipe found on the Neilgherries is or is not identical with the European one. I cannot give an opinion on the subject, as I have never seen the latter bird, and I have not a description of it to refer to; but I annex Jerdon's details of our Wood Snipe, and leave it for some scientific observer (not such a vagabond sportsman as I am) to point out if there be a difference. Jerdon's description of the Solitary Snipe of the Neilgherries is. vide page 672, Vol. 3, No. 868—*Gallinago Nemoricola*:

"THE WOOD SNIPE.—Top of the head black, with rufous-yellow longish markings; upper front of back black, the feathers margined with pale rufous-yellow, and often smeared bluish; scapulars the same, some of them with zig-zag markings; long dorsal plumes, black with zig-zag marks of rufous-grey as are most of the wing coverts; winglet and primary coverts dusky-black, faintly edged whitish, quills dusky, lower back and upper tail coverts barred reddish and dusky, tail with the central feathers black at the base, chesnut with dusky bars towards the tip; laterals dusky with whitish bars; beneath the chin white, the sides of the neck ashy, smeared with buff and blackish, breast ashy, smeared with buff and obscurely barred; the rest of the lower plumage, with the thigh coverts, whitish with numerous dusky bars; lower tail coverts rufescent with dusky marks, and the under wing covert barred black and whitish. Bill reddish brown, pale at the base beneath; irides dusky brown; leg plumbeous green. Length $12\frac{1}{2}$ to 13 inches extent 18, wing $5\frac{3}{4}$, tail $2\frac{1}{2}$, bill at front $2\frac{5}{8}$, tarsus $1\frac{3}{4}$, middle toe $1\frac{1}{8}$. Average weight $5\frac{1}{4}$ to 7 ozs.

So much for the large Wood or Solitary Snipe. After him we naturally come to his little cousin, the

PIN-TAILED SNIPE.

Not the *common* snipe of India generally, mind you O gunner of Ootacamund! but certainly the common, if not indeed the only snipe to be met with up here, and as far as I have seen in Mysore. Jerdon says that the Pin-tailed Snipe resembles the common snipe so closely, that it is very seldom discriminated by sportsmen, and often passed over by the naturalist; but that he has no information of its habits or of its time of appearance and departure, as distinguished from the common snipe. I can only give the rough notes of an unscientific sportsman on this subject; but before I do so, I shall take the liberty of quoting the following extract from a letter of "Smooth-bore's" which appeared in the *The Field* of the 24th November, 1866, and trust he will pardon my doing so; for his description is shorter, more explicit, and more easy to understand or remember than any other I can think of. He says "The common and pin-tailed snipe are found in the same fields, "cry in the same way when flushed, and look the same when "killed: yet there is a great difference between them if you "examine them closely. The common snipe is white under the "wing, with a few indistinct and irregular brown marks, and "the feathers of the tail are soft. The pin-tailed snipe has the "under wing coverts richly and regularly barred and the "lateral tail feathers sharp, stiff and pointed,"

Like many other men. I have only found out the difference between these two snipe within the last few years; that is since Jerdon's third volume was published and "Smooth-bore" and "Ornithognomon" wrote in *The Field*, so that I really cannot say whether the pin-tailed or the common snipe is the more abundant in Southern India; I believe the pin-tail is. It is the only snipe I have found in the Mysore country and on these Hills; but as, except in these two places, I have not had much snipe-shooting of late, I may be, very probably am, mistaken. In one bag however of 38 couple killed at the end of

December, about 22 miles from Madras, by a friend and me. the numbers of each were very equal. It was amusing to see my friend's astonishment when I pointed out the difference to him; at first he could not understand why I was turning over the birds one after the other, and separating them into two heaps; but when he caught the focus he went into the search most keenly. As far as my experience of the local distribution of pin-tailed and common snipe goes, I think that at Kamptee we find the common variety only; while at Secunderabad about five, and at Bellary fifteen, or perhaps twenty per cent, were pin-tails. What is a good bag of snipe on these hills? I have never killed more than six couple up here; $26\frac{1}{2}$ couple formed my best bag on the plains; but it was in the days of that relict of ancient barbarism, the muzzle loader; and I do not doubt that with the same chances of shots I could now nearly double the bag; for on the same bit of ground,—the borders of a small tank near Kemedi in the Northern Circars—I got in three afternoons' shooting, $70\frac{1}{2}$ couple in three bags, of 20, 24 and $26\frac{1}{2}$ each. The best bag at Bangalore this year was, I think $33\frac{1}{2}$ couple; but the sportsman (and he is a sportsman in the real and manly meaning of that word) is a first-rate performer with his weapon, and his average, for the 10 days he was out, $17\frac{1}{2}$ couple per diem. I have heard of most marvellous bags, even in the old muzzle-loading days, but my own idea of Indian snipe-shooting, taken all over the country, would be that 12 couple is a very fair bag anywhere. But what matters numbers, when you have climate and scenery and all the essentials of sport, as you fortunate dwellers in Ootacamund can get them? I would rather fag for a day, get three shots and miss two of them on the hills, than make the best bag I can think of on the plains; therefore, bless your stars! O! Editor, for being in Ootacamund, and put up a prayer that those who know how to value the place may be able to return to it.

The muzzle loaders!—I can hardly imagine, when I look at my pet old Westley-Richards, once so highly prized—and to do

the poor old lady justice, as good and expensive weapon as he could turn out,—that it is possible I could ever have liked her as I did. The time she took in loading, the care and attention and quantity of stores of one kind or another she required, one now thinks should have made one despise her; and in her case it certainly is a case of

“Being off with the old love,”

“Before you are on with the new.”

There are exceptions to all rules, and although it is not well for a man to set aside an old friend lightly, at other times the recording angel will not write him down as guilty of ingratitude when he laid aside his old muzzle-loader, and swore that he never would buy another. *Vale!* O Editor! I trust that you will be able to read this, but I am wandering; and hotel ink and pens cause even my handwriting to be worse than usual.

VAGRANT.

THE JACK SNIPE.

Last in point of size, but most certainly not least among the snipe family, either in rank or beauty, we come to that very lovely little bird, the Jack Snipe. We are, with men, horses, and—in short, with almost anything, except money, apt to look for quantity before quality, for matter before merit, and, forgetting the appeal of the little drummer boy, who when begging not to be left behind when his regiment was going into action, urged,

“Though small I’m made of right good stuff.”

apt to prefer large birds to small: so the jack snipe, the length of which, according to Jerdon, at page 676, vol. 3, of his *Birds*, is only eight-and-half inches,—a size which, when bill and tail are deducted, leaves a body not so large as a sparrow’s to fall back upon, is often despised both by the man who shoots

and the fair lady who receives the pretty little bird. I have never weighed a jack snipe, so I must quote from Jerdon, who gives the following as the weights of the snipes; and let us call them by this well-known word to save trouble, for these are only the rough notes of a wandering sportsman; scientific naturalists can of course talk their own language about them.

Woodcock	...	...	weight from	7	to	14	ozs.
Solitary Snipe	...	...	"	5½	to	7	"
Common Snipe	...	...	"	3½	to	5	"
The "pin-tailed" or snipe of the Neilgherries is slightly smaller, and the little Jack Snipe is							
							1½ ozs.

So much for size: now for game flavour. If this should entitle the jack snipe to "*blue blood*" among birds, he should take up a very high position, for dogs stand as steadily, or puzzle as keenly over him as they do over any other bird I can think of. Next, in place of honor at a dinner table, I can only say in proof that few birds should rank above him there, that some old writer on field sports,—I think no less an authority than Colonel Hawker, in his once well-known "*Advice to Young Sportsmen*"—tells them, that as the jack snipe is the most delicious of all birds for the table, yet from its small size, not likely to be valued by people in general, the sportsman should send his friends the full snipe and carefully reserve the jacks for his own table, thus getting full credit for his gift and keeping the most dainty morsel for himself! Yes! it is true O! lady fair! I agree with you, that no one but a man, and in a book written for men alone, could have ventured to put into print an idea so atricously selfish. Yet, as far as the judgment of ladies goes in matters of this kind, Colonel Hawker was right, as I once found to my cost. Once upon a time, long long ago, for it was when I was young enough to think of doing civil things, I carefully selected some jack snipe from my bag, and sent them to a sick lady, thinking in the verdant innocence of youth, and my recollection of what Hawker had

said about them, that I had done all that I could in the way of being thoughtful and good towards her. Alas! she saw that they were small, and was much annoyed with me, as she fancied that I had kept all the best birds for others! Being a woman, she was, of course, unjust, and as there was no help for it, I had to put up with the unmerited censure, and to send her big birds afterwards. Dear old Hawker! it appears only yesterday since, when I was a school-boy in Edinburgh, I first got his book out of a circulating Library, and contrary to all rule or regulation, sat up half the night to read it. Many a good wrinkle it must have given to sportsmen in all parts of the world; but it must be nearly out of print now that the glorious breech-loaders have swept away the old weapons.

Now for beauty. In this most important point I maintain that the jack snipe is unrivalled by any of his relations; not one of the snipe family can boast of his glossy green, black and purple dorsal plumes; and when he is shot, no bird that I can think of dies so gracefully! Like the man of old, of whom we read in our school days, he arranges his mantle before his exit from this world, so that, unless he is blown from the very muzzle of a gun by some hasty bungler who will not give him time and distance, his glossy plumage is always beautifully neat and smooth when he is picked up. The fact is, our little friend is so light (for $1\frac{3}{4}$ ozs. half of that being in feathers, extended in flight, do not count for much in even a very slight breeze) that the least breath of air catches his pretty little body as it falls and floats it to the ground as gently as falls the thistle-down. The jack snipe lies very close, is very difficult to flush, and when he does get up, always rises, *I think*, (I may be mistaken in this last statement, for it is some time since I shot one) silently, not with the sharp warning cry of alarm of the common or pin-tailed snipe; so that he flits into sight without giving any notice, or drops into the reeds more as does some large insect than as a bird. This insect-like flight

makes him somewhat difficult to shoot, all the more so as the little wretch, after rising almost at the sportsman's feet, often baffles the aim by making a sudden drop into cover long before he is far enough from the gun to save his tiny body from being shattered to fragments. Most of us have read of the Irish coast-guard officer, to whom one jack snipe afforded an entire winter's sport, at the rate of nearly 20 shots per diem, and to the perfect satisfaction of the coast-guardsmen, who, honest, keen good sportsman as he must have been at heart, whatever may have been the matter with his eyes or his powder, was not one of those vile slaughterers we all have the ill-luck to know of, nor cared for blood unless creditably won. Early the next season however, he unfortunately invited to breakfast some friend, to whom, having rashly confided the whereabouts of the Jack Snipe, he lent his gun. This friend went to the spot indicated, and at the first shot spoiled his host's sport for that season,

Although I have counted him as a Hill bird, I have never seen the Jack Snipe on the Neilgherries; but as the best authority I know of in such a matter told me that he had met it there, I have not the least hesitation in entering it in this list of game birds; if game birds there are, or can be, or indeed game, whether fur or feather of any description, in a place where, to the shame and sorrow of every true hearted or manly sportsman, be it written, there are not, during the breeding season, any laws to protect creatures of the chase from being slaughtered by pot-hunters and poachers. Yes, I know all that you would say:—*Snipe are not true game, nor do they breed here, and they are very well able to take good care of themselves.* All this is very true, but I cannot avoid a moan when I remember that guns are not taxed, and that during the breeding season just now commencing, birds and beasts of the chase will not be protected from the vilest and most unmanly poaching; nor *slaughterers*,—as HAWKEYE very truly terms

these slayers of soft horns, hinds and calves, of whom there are so many on the hills,—prevented from working their wicked will. There is a hard and unmusical Scotch term—but like most Scotch terms, practical withal,—for butchers, viz *fleshers*, which should exactly suit some of these men, for I have pretty good reason to believe, that at least one of them sells to natives the flesh of the deer he slays. I have a tale to tell on that subject some day, but it is too unpleasant and unsportsman-like a theme to take up calmly, while I am broiling under the hot winds at Kamptee, so I shall return to Jack Snipe,*

Jerdon says, at page 676 vol. 3, Birds of India, that “it makes its appearance later than the common snipe, and departs earlier, breeding in the northern parts of Europe and Asia.”

Jack Snipes are pretty generally diffused over all the parts of India I have been in. They select, I think, denser cover than other snipe; beds of reeds, or rushes, cane-fields and the like. Strange to say they are not, I think, to be found in Burmah, a country above all others, one would suppose, exactly suited to them, and in which, during the winter, the other snipe are very abundant.

*A few words before I close. I see there is a stir being made about the preservation of fish; and why not about Game? What has become of the Commissioner's draft Act?

Burked I suppose, because there is not a sportsman in the Council. Remember how the hills will go to the “demnition how-wows” if the attraction of sport no longer exists. Dost thou not know, oh! friend Editor! that that dark diabolical deed, hinted at by VAGRANT—the slaughtering of Sambur, be they stags, hinds or calves, by a Flesher (I thank thee, VAGRANT, for the word) and the meat sold to coolies and villagers, is a fact; and that this Flesher's apron (oh! how I thank thee again, dear VAGRANT) has been donned by other juvenile would-be sportamer, but who are nothing but shameless Fleshers. Raise up thy voice, mighty Editor and put to the blush—if any shame is left to them—these despicable slaughterers; and save, oh! save, the game on those dearly-loved Blue Mountains from utter annihilation! Come forward, ye sportsmen deserving of the proud name; come forward, slay and put down with the mighty weapon of scorn these miserable specimens of (shooting) humanity who dare to aspire to the noble title of sportsmen—but who are but base Fleshers (VAGRANT, I love thee for that word). Spare them not! is the urgent cry of your old friend.

HAWKEYE

They are never to be found in great numbers. More than two or three do not often fall to one gun in the course of a day's shooting; but four times I have killed six couples of jacks while making up a bag of snipe. The first time was in a reedy swamp, within a few miles of Kimeddy, in the Northern Circars; the next was in some cane-fields or beetle,—I forget which, it was very high and deep cover at any rate,—below the well known lake at Saugor, in Central India, the third was in similar ground, about sixteen miles from Kamptee, the fourth was near Gooty.* It may be a whim or fancy on my part, but it always gives me greater pleasure to drop a jack than an ordinary snipe: the shot is generally a satisfactory one, sufficiently difficult to make it interesting; and the little bird when it is picked up, is generally so smooth, neat and glossy, that handling him is in itself a perfect pleasure.

So much for the Snipe family. I have not included the Painted Snipe in this list, for I do not think that this handsome bird is to be found on the Neilgherries! but if it is, let me advise any one who shoots a Painted Snipe to keep the wings for the hat of the lady he likes best. He ought at least, to get a pleasant smile in return, and what man worth his salt would not do a great deal for that?

Well I have said my say about snipe of all sorts and conditions, so shall conclude this scrawl. My next shall be about quail, or jungle-fowl, or pea-fowl, or something of that sort.

I am not writing for naturalists, for they know all about these things, so can please myself in the order in which to take my birds.

* On each of these last occasions I bagged a bittern of which I have only killed four in India.

I do not suppose that any one, except a sportsman, can care about my rambling and unconnected productions; but if they do interest any one fond of out-door life, I shall be contented.

I should, in the proper place, have mentioned that at Russelcondah, in the Northern Circars, I found in the marshy ground between the cantonment and the Nowgong plain, the nest of a snipe with four fully-fledged young birds in it. I did not make a note of the date, but am nearly certain that it was during July. Jerdon says that he doubts whether they breed in Upper Burmah or the marshes of Bengal; but I am very much inclined to think that a few each year remain to breed in the ditch of the old fort of Tonghoo, in Burmah. Whether the young birds I saw were pin-tailed or common snipe I cannot say; I did not then know that there were two species of this well known bird. If I mistake not, however, ORNITHOGNOMON, in *The Field*, says that *pin-tailed snipe* do sometimes breed in India; if so, I have no doubt that they occasionally breed on the Neilgherries, and in no place are they more likely to establish their houses, than the edge of the Ootacamund lake, near the cricket ground.

On the 13th of November, while I was shooting near Pykara with a friend, one of us killed a pin-tailed snipe, not fully-fledged, several of the quills and wing-feathers being still sheathed. Now, this bird must, I think, have been born on the hills. I do not suppose that his imperfect plumage could have brought him all the way from Northern Europe or Asia, in time to reach Pykara early in November. SMOOTHBORE, who knows more of these matters than I do, can perhaps set us right on this point.

VAGRANT.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SOUTH OF INDIA OBSERVER.

SIR.—In the admirable series of letters written by VAGRANT in your paper, he has more than once done me the honor of quoting from my notes, and requests my opinion on subjects connected with Natural History. VAGRANT seems to think that I am a scientific naturalist, which I regret to say I am not; but any information I can give about Natural History generally and ornithology in particular I shall be most happy to communicate.

First, as to the Woodcock. The latest date I have known it seen on these hills, is the 10th May; one was seen on the Droog two years in succession about that date. I should think that the 15th of October is about the earliest date they are met with on these hills. I myself never saw one before 2nd November which is also about the time I have first seen them in Ireland. I do not know if the rule holds good in this country, but at home, when we saw a Jack snipe we knew the Woodcocks had arrived. With regard to the Solitary snipe here (which from comparison with a plate of the European bird I believe to be identical) they are found on all the hill ranges in the South of India; the Shevaroy, Annemullies, and Pulnies. On the Shevaroy, they are more abundant than any where I know. Once, on 2nd or 3rd of January, when passing the Shevaroy hill Railway Station, one was brought for sale alive, the cooly said he had caught it, but I found out some years afterwards, that it had struck the telegraph wire which broke its wing. VAGRANT'S note on the peculiar coloration of one he shot is very interesting. In VAGRANT'S last letter he asks my opinion about pin-tailed snipe breeding in this country? From personal observation, and information received from brother sportsmen, I think it likely that a few brace do remain and breed, although I myself have never found their nests. I have shot them very early in September on the Shevaroy Hills, and think it likely a brace or two may nest near the end of the lake there; but if they are to be found any where it will be where VAGRANT suggests,—by the upper end of the lake at Ooty I have known them there late in May, and I have asked a friend of VAGRANT'S to look out for them there in June and July. I do not think it is generally known that when breeding snipe make a most peculiar humming sound. They rise high in the air and hover like a kestrel, all the while making a noise exactly like a young bear sucking its paw, but, (as well as I remember) increasing in intensity as the bird descends. I have heard numbers in Ireland about the month of May humming as I have described—the pin-tailed snipe will be likely to make a sharper noise than the common snipe, a Swedish naturalist having found out that it is made by the tail feathers. He succeeded in imitating the with the feathers fastened on a wire and moved sharply through the air.

I have in vain inquired from sportsmen as to the percentage and time of shooting the pin-tail as compared with the common snipe. About Erode I shot; about 8 per cent of common snipe; near Coimbatore they were all pin-tails, I

only once counted a friend's bag made near Madras, and I think the percentage of common was about 10 ; but as I said before I find it very hard to get definite reliable information from "shooters," who keep no notes.

I have to call VAGRANT's attention to the fact that, when cooked, snipe in this country have no stomachs !! The fact is that all cooks (except my own) that I have met, remove the stomach or "sand-bag" through the mouth of the bird. I need hardly say that the trail is thus ruined. Snipe and cock should always be hung by the head, and not by the feet. "VAGRANT" may feel quite certain that when flushed, the jack-snipe utters no sound. I have shot a brace during a day's shooting near Ooty some seven years ago and several during the two months I was there,—November and December. I am under the impression that Jack snipe, after being flushed, have the power of retaining their scent in the same way as the American quail are known to do. I remember an excellent pointer I had at home, frequently flushing them without acknowledging their scent, after they had once been put up.

SMOOTH-BORE.

24th May 1869.

PIN-TAILED SNIPE.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SOUTH OF INDIA OBSERVER.

SIR,—A few months ago, I wrote a letter in your paper, stating I thought it probable the Pin-tailed Snipe bred at Ootacamund. Late last month a friend was kind enough, at my request, carefully to beat all the margin of the lake, not only without finding either birds or nests, but also without seeing either "chalkings" or "borings." Under these circumstances, although it is extremely unpleasant to find yourself wrong when you have expressed a decided opinion on a subject, we must conclude that the Pin-tailed Snipe does not breed on the Neilgherries.

I dare say VAGRANT will regret, as much as I do, that we were both mistaken, but will be glad that an erroneous impression on a Natural History subject should not be allowed to get abroad.

SMOOTH-BORE.

9th August 1869.

PEA-FOWL.

Far be it from me to treat with disrespect the memory of my little favorite, the Jack Snipe; but if great men need but one step from the sublime to the ridiculous, why should not a Vagrant try to take one in another direction, and in his list of game birds, place next to the smallest, the most magnificent and perhaps the largest of the game birds in the world? I believe that ostriches, emeus and cassowaries are each and all entitled to game honors, so are bustards of sorts. Yet in blood, length, and beauty, if not in weight, a peacock should assuredly be placed in the highest rank. Before we deal further with them, however let me give the following extract from one who certainly never seemed to think that he also would be looked upon as one of the "old writers." What would not I give to get some of the books to which he refers? However to go on with my extracts.

I find in a copy of a book, that was considered good authority in former days, viz. *Cheape and Good HUSBANDRY, for the well ordering of all Beasts and Fowles, and for the generall cure of their Diseases. Contayning the Nature, Breeding, Choise. Vse, Feeding and Curing of the diseases of all manner of Cattell, as Horse, Oxe, Cow. Sheepe, Goates, Swine and tame Conies*** Gathered together for the general good and profite of this whol Realme, by exact and assured experience from English practises, both certaine, easie, and cheape; differing from all former and foraine experiments, which eyther agreed not with our clime. or were too hard to come by, or ouer-costly, and to little purpose; all which herein are auoyded.*

The Third Edition, Printed by T. S. for Roger Jackson, and are to be sold at his shop, neere the Conduit in Fleet Street—1623—which I possess, and which I like to suppose, may have once belonged to some old cavalier or squire of Sir Walter Scott's novels, the following extract which, after its quaint

fashion, may interest those who, like me, read more for amusement than for profit,—In “Booke 2 which treateth of the *Cure and ordering of all poultrie*,” Chapter XX, is written thus.

Of the Peacockes, and Peahens, their increase and ordering.

“Peacockes, howsoever our old writers are pleased to de-
“ceiue themselves in their praises are birds more to delight the
“eye by looking on them, than for any particular profit; the
“best commodity rising from them being the clensing and
“keeping of the yard free from venomous thinges, as Toades,
“Newtes, and such like, which is there daily food: whence it
“comes, that their flesh is very vnwholesome; and vsed in
“great banquets more for the rarenesse then the nourishment;
“for it is most certaine, roste a Peacocke or Peahen neuer so
“dry, then set it up, and looke on it the next day, and it will
“be bloud-rawe, as if it had not been rosted at all.

“The Peahen loues to lay her Egges abroad in bushes and
“hedges, where the Cocke may not find them, for if he do. he
“will breake them; therefore as soone as she begins to lay,
“separate her from the Cocke, and house her til she haue
“brought forth her young, and that the cornet of feathers begin
“to rise at their foreheads, and then turne them abroad and
“the Cocke will loue them, but not before. A Peahen sits iust
“thirty dayes, and in her sitting any graine with water, is good
“enough: before your Chickens goe abroad, you shall feed them
“with fresh greene Cheese, and Barly Mele, with water; but
“after they goe abroad, the Dam will prouide for them. The
“best time to set a Peahenne is at the beginning of the Moone,
“and if you set Hen Egges amongst her egges, shee will nourish
“both equally. These Peachickens are very tender, and the
“least cold doth kill them; therefore you must have care to
“keep them warme, and not to let them goe abroad but when
“the Sun shineth. Now, for the feeding of them, it is a labour
“you may well saue, for if they goe in a place where there i

“any corne stirring, they will haue part, and being meate
 “which is seldome or neuer eaten, it mattereth not so much
 “for their fattening.”

This curious book, which is signed G. M., and was doubtless written by “*Gervase Markham, Gent.*,” a copy of whose “*Maister Peece*” On All Knowledge, belonging to the *Smith or Horse Leech*” and for the “*eighth time newly Imprinted*” in 1656, I have also; shows further, “*the whole Art of Riding great Horses with the breaking and ordering of them; and the dieting of the Running, Hunting and Ambling Horse, and the manner how to use them in their traile. Also approued Rules for the Cramming and Fattening of all sorts of Poultry and Fowles, both tame and wilde, &c. And diuers good and wel’ approued Medicines, for the Cure of all the diseases in Hawkes of what kind soeuer. Together with the Vse and Profit of Pees: the making of Fish ponds, and the taking of all sorts of Fish*” It is addressed in “*all dutifull seruice, To the Right Honourable and most truly ennobled with all inward and outward Vertues, Richard Sackville, Baron of Buckhurst, and Earle of Dorset*

If you, O Editor! think that any of your readers would care for such things, I can give you some extracts from this and other old works, which although they will be despised by learned men and utilitarians, who can of course, skip them over may perchance amuse or interest idle men, who, like your present correspondent, do not reflect much credit on their school-masters. But this is a terribly long digression from the beautiful subject of this letter.

As surely as each fresh sportsman, upon landing in India and hearing that these glorious birds may be found, longs for the time to come when he may be able to say that he has killed one, and to obtain with credit one of those magnificent green trains, more than four feet long, which, overshadowing the

true tail, makes such a handsome trophy, so certainly is that sportsman disappointed. If there be great satisfaction in dropping a partridge neatly, still greater in bagging a red grouse, and greatest of all in making a pretty shot at a woodcock, how intense must be the pleasure and glory of killing a peacock! Alas! the reality of peacock-shooting will disenchant him sorely. How excited our young friend becomes, when just at day-light some morning, close to his line of march, he first hears from hill and forest all around him, that wild call, so well known to all Indian sportsmen, and so musical to their ears; for, hear it when or how they may, it must recall to memory many a day in woodland or on mountain side and many a pleasant comrade, many a successful beat for large game, or many a blank day (and are not there many pleasant memories of blank days?) passed among the wild scenery which the peafowl especially delights in. How wofully is our tyro dissatisfied, how bitterly disgusted is he, when having proceeded to stalk some magnificent bird, at which, from a hill top, he had a hasty glimpse, as it was feeding in the open and which he feels certain of bringing to bag, he finds that after he has crept through the most abominable and ruthless thorns, leaving on each a payment of his temper, flesh or clothes, he has only just succeeded in seeing, or rather in thinking that he saw, for a second the head of a peahen, as she darted through the undergrowth. There must be a little bit of open ahead of him, and the birds are so large that he cannot fail to get them as they run or fly across it. Suddenly, on both sides, and in front and rear of him, arises such a flapping of wings as he has never heard before, and although each gigantic bird, as it rises, utters a loud cry of alarm, which some one,—Captain Rice, in his "Tiger-shooting," I think,—renders as "tok-tok," "tok-tok," not a feather is to be seen. Or, perhaps our friend *does* see them as they rise: he must bag a couple right and left, for has he not got very large shot in his gun? And does he not know something about shooting? had he not lots of practice last

September with partridges over the stubble, the potatoes and the turnips, with old Basto and Rover? (our tyro is, you will perceive, dear Editor, one of those of olden muzzle-loading days, before the evil fashion of "*driving*" birds, instead of scientifically working for them with a brace of beautiful and well-broken dogs came in;—let us rejoice over the disappearance of the slow muzzle-loaders, but mourn for the fast modern practice) "*Bang!*" he almost feels ashamed of himself for the murder for is he not certain of knocking to bits, that grand cock that, with a magnificent green train—so long that the wonder is, that it does not hinder flight altogether,—has just got up a little behind our sportsman? *Never mind; we are certain of the cock, and we'll stop one of the hens that are flapping up now on all sides with the second barrel!* What! not down? surely the shot must have fallen out: yet there certainly was a soul of shot striking something. "*Bang!*" however goes the second barrel, without any further acknowledgement from the cock than an increased flapping of the wings for a second or two, after which the magnificent bird, looking more lovely as each moment lessens our chance of bagging him, steadies himself in his flight, and skims over the trees in that long valley at our feet, as if to show us that his wings are all right; and then, to convince us that we have not damaged his legs, winds up with a run of fifty yards or so before he disappears,

This sort of thing goes on for years, as our friend shoots his way through the jungles of the Northern Circars, Orissa, the Ceded Districts, the Lower Deccan, some parts of Southern India (the present writer does not know much about many of the Southern Indian forests, however; so in this last instance he may have unwittingly maligned some of them) and Burmah; until he almost determines never again to trouble himself about peafowl, and never fails, when he has a chance, to try his luck after them once more; and of course during this time, if he be in the least degree worthy of the name of sportsman, he has.

when after large game, had many opportunities of seeing these gorgeous birds, and of becoming acquainted with their habits.

In matters not whether the hunter's post be one overhanging the Orissa valley, while waiting any favors in the way of sambur, or spotted deer, munt-jac or bear, mayhap a tiger or panther, the army of beaters and good St. Hubert may send; or, better still, from the back of a well-bred horse, that knows thoroughly what there may be to do presently; watching a line of elephants and camels with beaters between them, working their tardy way through long grass and bushes, towards where the hog should break, (as we write we can think of more than one sweet spot in the Deccan, and some particularly bad riding ground and sure finds near the banks of the Beas river, in the Saugor country;) or perhaps from the back of an elephant beating for the forest king himself; there are few more pleasing sights than to watch flock after flock of pea-fowl rising before the beaters and, uttering their peculiar warning cry, skimming rocket-like towards the lower ground.

On our sportsman being ordered into Bundlekund or Central India, he will find however that instead of the pea-fowl being a difficult bird to circumvent, it is so abundant and so tame that he is almost ashamed to fire at one! in fact, until the mutiny, pea-fowl shooting was forbidden in many of the Hindoo states, and the birds were literally as tame as domestic fowls.

I once counted 25 of all sizes, feeding in a field (of wheat, I think) near the preserve of the Maharajah of Chirkarry in Bundlekund. So that, take it how one may, there is never much satisfaction in pea-fowl shooting. One very hot evening (for it was towards the end of April, and the heat and dust storms of Central India at that season are too well known to require description) at Gyseabad, on the banks of the Kine river, during a short stroll about dusk, and close to our large

camp of many regiments of all three arms (it was during the mutiny) I killed four very fine cocks; the last I ruthlessly potted, almost in our camp as he sat on a high branch of a tree near which many camp followers were collected cooking their suppers. It was then so dark that, until I could make out his tail against the fading light, I fancied he was a vulture. The first peacock I killed that evening gave me an excellent example of the ingenuity these birds display in concealing themselves. Feeling sure that I had hit him hard as he rose at some distance, I watched him carefully, although he flew far (several hundred yards) before he settled among small bushes on a bare rising ground opposite me. On reaching the spot I searched for him long without success: there was no cover near, to which he could have run, and he could not have flown from the spot without having attracted my attention.

Sorely puzzled, I was about to relinquish my search, when I caught the glitter of a bright eye close to my feet, and lo! there was the lovely bird stretched beside me, his body partly concealed by the few blades of dry grass that clung about a very small bush under which he had crawled, his long snake-like neck laid flat and extended, as much as possible in front of it, and his grand four feet of train closed and pressed against the bare ground on the other side of the bush. I pretended not to see him, and he remained for some time with his bright eye fixed on me, until I attempted to catch him, when he rose, apparently as fresh as ever, nearly upsetting me in so doing.

I had time however to upset him altogether with the gun which I had laid aside when I tried to catch him; a neat shot it was too, for it was with a bullet and he was in a great hurry.

What is it, oh, dear Editor! that makes a bird "tower," a shot in back or head, spine or brain, I forget which? I once had the good fortune to see a peacock "tower," just as would a quail, partridge or pheasant, and the scene was so perfect a

bit of bright and Chinese coloring, that, although I cannot do half justice to the task, I must attempt to describe it.

Near Burkool, in Orissa, on the S. W. part of the Chilka lake, that never-to-be-forgotten paradise for a sportsman or a naturalist, I had a long shot at a pea-cock that I had been stalking for some time about the shores of the lake. The bird was rising at the time ; on being hit he "towered" to a great height, his tail of course being closed at the time ; he then turned over and came to the ground stone dead, his tail, a very fine one, opening like a fan during his fall, and with each of its hundred eyes glittering against the early sun, in a way marvelous to behold, and far beyond my hope to realize to any reader.

The scene was, however, the only one I have ever known that caused me in the least to appreciate the bright coloring of some of the Chinese and Japanese drawings, for all was glaring and gaudy : the more so as it had the rays of the early sun full on it ; in the back ground was a nook of the lake and a bright hillock, in front of that, one of those small glaring Orissa temples or shrines, streaked with bright red and white, and surrounded by a fence about which grew much of the blue convolvulus, with again in *its* front, some gaudy red-flowered tree, cotton, or "*butea frondosa*" (bastard teak) probably, and nearer than all, passing through the air in front of them, the glittering bird as it fell to the earth. I cannot hope, with my imperfect pen, dear Editor, to bring the scene before you, but I do not think that any painter in attempting it could employ too brilliant colors.

It is a common mistake of young sportsmen to use very large shot for pea-fowl ; they are thus tempted to fire into the "*brown*" of the bird, so to speak : they hit him doubtless, but generally fail to drop him within retrieving distance. A No. 3 Eley's cartridge will, of course, when a gun is held properly, settle almost any thing (I have myself on two occasions killed spotted

deer with them) but for pea-fowl I think that any ordinary shot—say No. 6, 5, or 4, a man may have in his gun should suffice, if he will only fire at the head and neck of the bird; remembering at the time that the former is nearly as large as a quail, and being not nearly so rapid in motion, a more easy shot.

So many of our Madras sportsmen have now to visit Burmah, that I may be excused if I here refer to the pea-fowl of that country, or rather that and those countries to the eastward and southward of Bengal,—“*Pavo Muticus*” or “*Assamicus* :” why the former name I know not, for it is as worthy as its Indian cousin. This bird may be shortly described as having golden green in its plumage, where the common pea-cock has blue, and being as Jerdon says, perhaps a still more beautiful, though not so showy a bird. It is in the crest however that the most marked distinction exists. Jerdon writes that in the common pea-cock the crest has “about 24 feathers only, webbed at the tip” and that the crest of the Burmese pea-cock is “composed of about ten or more slender barbed feathers.” I have not, since Jerdon’s third volume was published, had an opportunity of counting the feathers in each of these crests, but I cannot help thinking that he has under-estimated the number in the Burmese bird. He has, however, I believe, the same number given by Linnæus. Doctor McClelland, in some observations for the *Indian Review*, published in 1837, says “that the crest is composed of 30 “feathers with naked shafts, and crescented summits.” Surely if Jerdon is right, McClelland must be very far wrong. I have not. *The Field* to refer to, but I feel sure that ORNITHOGNOMON in it must have given a correct description of the Burmese bird. Can you or any of your readers set me right on this point? There is a bird in the Madras Museum a very well-stuffed specimen of a young cock, which I brought alive from Burmah, and which, being placed near one of the Indian peacocks, gives a very good example of both, I do not think that the Burmese

bird differs in the least from his Indian cousin in habits: he may perhaps be a shade more wary. Hybrids between the two are, I believe, not uncommon. The finest peacock I have ever seen was one of these; he was in the collection of a rich Baboo,—name forgotten,—near Calcutta, and in his plumage the green and blue tints were beautifully mingled, "*shot*" is I believe the term used by ladies in describing silk with the same blending of color.

This reminds me of an amusing accident which might have turned out seriously. I went to see this collection with one of the best naturalists in India, but a terrible filget withal and was driving my friend in a buggy drawn by a very light-hearted stud-bred filly, not yet accustomed to strange scenes, and was accordingly taking her along very quietly. Suddenly my companion who had for some time being growing more and more fidgetty, turned round to me with this withering remark:—"I beg your pardon, but as I see you are not much accustomed "to horses, will you permit me to drive?" Now, dear Editor, even in these days when I am old and rusted, I still flatter myself that I can handle a horse; therefore only think how the hot blood of my youth must have been frozen at this terrible speech! I was so dumb-founded that I gave up the reins without hesitation, or attempt to vindicate my character. Shortly afterwards we turned into the Baboo's gate, and drove up a road with a stiff and well trimmed mindee-hedge on either side. We were suddenly met by an Emeu, or Cassowary—I forget which. I do not suppose that that the filly had ever heard of

stalked the dusky Cassowary,
"On the plains of Timbuctoo;
"There he ate the missionary,
"Beads and Prayer, and hymn-book too."

but on seeing the devilish-looking creature, half bear and half turkey, approaching her, she turned and went clean over the hedge, falling herself at the other side, smashing the shafts,

doing no end of harm to the buggy, and sending the two occupants through the air as if they had been shot from a catapult.

We were not hurt; but as we came home in state, in a gaudily painted carriage of the Baboo's, my companion was most repentant. I do not wonder at the young mare being nervous about the uncanny looking Emeu, for I once had, with a horse trust-worthy on parade and so forth, a laughable example of how, even a well-trained animal sometimes hate strange-looking creatures. In the Bellary district, with a very long shot I broke the tip of one of the wings of an immense cock bustard, which although unable to get quite off the ground, could, with his long ostrich-like legs, his unwounded wing, and nearly the whole power of the other, make such a rapid retreat over the cotton fields, that I had to get on my horse to close with him; a very short gallop enabled me to do this, but when I got up to my quarry, the wretched bustard, by ruffling every feather like an excited turkey-cock, and uttering his peculiar "honk", or grunting cry, so alarmed the brute I rode, that I could not, for some moments, get near enough to push the poor bird over with the shaft of my spear.

But all this has very little to say to the manners and customs of pea-fowl, which must need all their cunning to preserve themselves from their enemies. First and most dangerous of all,—and most cruel of all, I say it to your shame, oh ye gentle ladies and smug law-makers of India—are the detestable native poachers, who are permitted to capture these birds during the breeding season, to sew up their eyes and carry them about from house to house for sale: at a time too when they are utterly unfit for food. I mention this, first as the barbarous cruelty of thus torturing a captured creature, or of leaving a helpless brood of young to die of starvation, is never taken into account by the English in *India*. Would they permit it for a day at home? After this worst of foes, should rank the common jungle-cat or "chaus," a large lynx-like animal, known

all men who wander much in the wilds. Jerdon mentions at page 112 of his "Mammals," that he was once robbed of a wounded pea-fowl by one of these cats, and almost precisely a similar incident occurred to me in the Deccan. Just as I had shot a pea-fowl at the edge of a field, some nilgai took off my attention and when, a few minutes afterwards, I went to pick up the bird I found it had been dragged into cover and partially eaten by a large "chaus," which to my disgust, I missed with both barrels. Jackalls too, and snakes must destroy a great number, and, I doubt not from the excitement caused to pea-fowl when a tiger or panther is on foot, that, even these animals do not disdain to eat one of these birds whenever they have a chance; they are not far wrong either, for, notwithstanding what old Gervase Markham says, a plump young pea-hen, when killed in the cold season and kept long enough, makes a very dainty dish.

I am really very much obliged to "SMOOTHBORE" for the information he gave me about jack-snipe; the little I know about natural history has all been picked up in the open air, on hill side or swamp, and therefore I can write very little that is not already known.

Dear "HAWKEYE," can hit harder and write better than I can, and needs not my weak arm to assist him. He will be glad to know that within the last few weeks I met a sportsman, who, during a long trip through some of the best parts of the part of the world in which I am at present quartered, had religiously abstained from firing at spotted deer or Sambur, of which he might have made a large bag, as the stags were all in "soft horn" or the females had fawns with them; let HAWKEYE however, spare not "*fleshers*" and "Slaughterers" whenever he hears a foul tale of butchery; and I pray thee, Oh! gentle Editor! help the good cause by advancing your own banner into the field, and urging all true sportsmen to the rescue. It is, I know, popularly supposed that a few fortunate men who live on the

hills, wish to institute game laws there, merely from a selfish feeling, and in order that their own sport may be increased. You know, dear Editor, that this is not the case with the warmest advocates for the protection of your game.

I must now conclude, but before I do so, please let me ask you to mention how the pheasants sent up from Madras are getting on? * I am much interested in the experiment; those sent were I supposed the "*Monaul*." The pheasants of China, and the well known bird of Burmah should do well on the Neilgherries, and so should the English one; but it is vain to think of them until game laws have been introduced.

VAGRANT.

JUNGLE FOWL.

After Pea-fowl one naturally thinks of Jungle-fowl, which are, perhaps, the most interesting of our game birds, and the southern species of which, the handsome *Gallus Sonneratii*, or grey jungle fowl, is to be found every where on the hills. Their pursuit is often as unsatisfactory and difficult as that of the pea-fowl, for although they may be decoyed by various unworthy devices of which the less said the better, no birds are more wide awake or more quick in hearing the approach of any enemy. The game-looking cock has good reason for this, for he is much sought after for his plumage, which Jerdon

*The pheasants when sent up here, were called "Impeyan," pheasants.

We understand they are found in the snowy parts of the Himalayas. All the hens died at Madras from the heat. The four cocks sent up, arrived very dull in their plumage, and all, more or less, sickly. Two died not long after their arrival; the upper mandible of one of these had grown to such a length, that it was supposed to have interfered with the bird's feeding. The remaining two have completely recovered, and are now in beautiful plumage. We believe the Commissioner is quite satisfied that they will thrive well in this climate, and has written to Simla for some hens.—ED, S. I. O.

describes pretty nearly in the following terms. Whole head and neck, with the hackles, blackish grey, with yellow spots; each feather being blackish, with the shaft white and two spots, the terminal one of somewhat square form, as if a drop of yellow sealing wax; the other whitish, passing on the wing coverts into oblong spots of glistening wood-brown; ear-coverts pale rufous: the rest of the plumage above and below, blackish grey the feathers white shafted, and those on the flanks broadly centred and tipped with wood-brown; upper tail coverts glossy purple; the central tail feathers glossy green, under tail-coverts glossy black. He omits however to mention the destructive qualities of this plumage, and that of the numberless devices employed against the unwary, whether by man against fish, or by one of the unscrutable laws of retaliation, by woman in the subjection of man; it is one of the most killing lures known. Have you, O Ladye fair! like that other charming woman of the song "lots of tall Irish cousins?" (or Scotch ones will do indeed the latter for choice, for they are the steadiest and least given to indiscreet talking.) No gift, short of one of your smiles, can be more acceptable to any one of them, who knows how to wield salmon or trout rod, than a few of the hackles of a grey jungle cock; while, when placed in a pretty hat, to set off a still prettier face (but let us pause here; for the recollection causes our erratic mind to go astray into many a pleasant corner of the days of our youth) what plume can be so quietly, therefore so dangerously, fascinating? Yes, most lovely being, it is true that your magnificent and gorgeous *Bird of Paradise* train is far handsomer, but, it is only so commanding and queen-like a woman as you are, faultless alike in face and figure, and of such exquisite taste in colors and dress, who should wear so striking a head-piece. For mark my words, even loafer and wanderer that I am, a woman is always badly dressed when she wears anything that can catch the eye of a man before he is struck and brought down by her face, or figure, eyes, voice, smile, or ankles, or whatever her

most effective missile of destruction may be. Now, the quiet looking grey jungle cock plume is becoming to all, to dark or fair, to Juno or Titania: while notwithstanding its almost quaker-like simplicity, perhaps from its game and wild associations, it appears to give that faint suspicion of a knowing little dash of naughtiness, which to many sedate minds, as well to those of ill-regulated Vagrants, is so irresistibly attractive.

Jerdon says, at page 539 of his third volume, that "this handsome jungle-fowl is found in Southern India only, extending on the east coast to a little north of the Godavery, in Central India to the Pachmurri or Mahadeo hills, north of Nagpore; and on the west coast to the Rajpeepla hills, where it meets the red jungle-fowl. Its occurrence on the Pachmurri hills is most probably its Eastern extension from the Western Ghats and the Rajpeepla hills, and it will probably be found all along the Satpura range.† I do not know of its occurrence east of the Mahadeo hills, until the neighbourhood of the lower part of the Godavery is reached. It is very abundant on the Malabar Coast, especially in the more elevated districts, as in the Wynad and it ascends to the summit of the Neilgherries; it is also, common in suitable localities on the Eastern Ghats and in the various isolated ranges of hills in the South of India. It is not rare in the Naggery hills near Madras, and it is constantly brought for sale to the Madras market." He also mentions, that, like the red jungle-fowl, it is particularly partial to bamboo jungles, and that "the call of the cock is very peculiar, being a broken and imperfect kind of crow, quite unlike that of the red jungle cock and impossible to describe." Sportsmen from Ceylon think that in the cry of their jungle cock (*Gallus Lineatus*) which is, Jerdon tells us, something like the red jungle-fowl, they recognise the words "*George Joyce*." Our Indian sportsmen do not attempt to tie down the well known call by any set words or trammels; to me it always appears to be one of the most joyous shouts of woodland glee we know of. The bird possibly may intend it

† The finest grey jungle cock I have killed was bagged at Chikalda on the Gáwilgarh extremity of the Sâtpura Range, and to the Lady who deigned to accept the plume are these writings dedicated.

for a battle cry of defiance, but we should rather give him credit for that sheer lightness of heart, added to a little love of swagger before the more dangerous sex, which leads so many bipeds into all sorts of snares and mischief. Jerdon is right in saying that these birds ascend to the summits of the Neilgherries; I missed one handsomely, one fine day last winter, well up on the Dodabett heights; we cannot go much above that within the ranges of the Ootacamund sportsmen. Handsome as a trophy, worthy as a gift, and dainty as a dish, though the jungle-cock be, his pursuit affords little pleasure. It is too often a sneaking and ignominious crawl, during which the pursuer suffers the pangs of Tantalus; for, while he creeps through thorns, in bramble and under-growth so dense that he is unable to see three yards before him, while spiders' webs, dust, and bits of bark from the trees, not to mention the many evil insect pests that infest the edges of jungle, assail his eyes and mouth, he hears the bird quite close, shouting cheerfully and perhaps flapping its wings in wanton defiance. Another yard must get us within sight of Chanticleer, and our only dread is that we shall be obliged to shoot him from so short a distance, that we must blow him to bits. We think we can creep, as does one of Cowpers' Red Indians, but "*snap*" goes an abominable dry twig under our boot. The noise, faint though it be, is answered by a low warning cackle, whether from cock or hen we cannot tell, but, we know that all chance is now upset and not a feather will this time fall to our lot. So much for trying to steal up to them. I cannot induce myself to apply the memory-thrilling term, "*stalking*" to so ignoble a pursuit; that word should only be applied to what dear HAWKEYE calls, and so correctly, "*the poetry of sport.*"

To my taste, the only time that grey jungle fowl shooting can be satisfactory, is when at the end of a beat, from the corner of a covert, his appearance announced by extra commotion of dogs and men, a fine cock rises well above the trees, and

in a tremendous hurry, with an immense flapping of wings, sails away, his long tail streaming behind him, and offers as pretty and sportsmanlike a shot as man need wish for. Even on such occasions, however, one is not certain what these birds may do; for jungle fowl, the hens especially, will, when bullied by dogs, often fly quietly into some low tree, hop from that on to a higher one, and remain there concealed in the most marvellous manner. I verily believe that they sometimes, in these cases, creep into holes in the trunk or branches. One of the red jungle fowl of Burmah, sprung in some open rice fields, thus flew into a high, but almost perfectly bare mangoe stump. We distinctly saw her sitting on the only branch there was, and heard her abusing the dogs that were barking about the root. On our approach she disappeared, and although there were three or four pairs of keen and hungry eyes looking out, and we did all we knew to dislodge the bird, not a sign of her could we see. We got tired at last and went on, leaving a little Burmese herd-boy to watch the tree; we had hardly got out of shot when she flew out again. I forget why no one was sent up after her, but am certain that there was not cover enough about the nearly naked stump to conceal the bird, unless she had gone into some hole, as would an owl, barbet or woodpecker.

As with pea-fowl, the subject of this sketch has many enemies; the worst of all being the vile poaching bird (and beast) catchers, who, nearly always, during the breeding season, when all laws of humanity and sport require that they should be left unmolested, snare everything they can, sew up the eyes of their unhappy captives,—“tender mercies” eh, dear HAWKEYE?—and carry them about from door to door until they are sold, or die of ill-usage.

Many kind men argue that as matters in the poaching way in India are now as bad as they can be, they must mend somehow, and that meanwhile these demons of bird-catchers must live. My notion is, that, as the greater may include the less,

the man who can commit the crimes I have mentioned, would not, to earn a livelihood, hesitate to perpetrate some lesser offence, dacoity with murder for example. It is better for India British or un-British, that he should commit such minor fault and for it be hanged, transported, shut up, or suffer whatever may be its fitting punishment, than that he should be permitted to poach.

To all the other foes of the pea-fowl, the jungle cock is also exposed; and wary, powerful and active although he be, I believe that he and his relations often become the prey of the larger hawks and falcons. When in Burmah, I have several times seen large crested hawks (I think the "*crested hawk eagle*." No. 35 of Jerdon, whose book I had not then to refer to) chase, and one occasion capture, the red jungle fowl of that country, which, although not so handsome as their grey cousins of Southern India, get on the wing far more readily,—more as pheasants do in fact, and therefore give better sport. Not content with jungle fowl, one of these fine crested hawks insisted upon robbing my poultry yard, and in spite of my teeth or gun, continued to levy black mail for many days. At last it was reported that after an unsuccessful raid, she invariably flew back to the same look-out tree; thither on the next alarm I followed. The tip of one pinion was all that was hurt by the shot, a medical friend most skilfully repaired the damage, the magnificent freebooter perfectly recovered, and for many months lived on a tree opposite my house with as much liberty as a couple of very light chains linked together would permit. Her daily ration was one of the white egrets, so abundant at some seasons in Burmah, or a dead or wounded crow, the latter meal being always the cause of much commotion amongst the disconsolate relations of the repast. On this diet she thrived wonderfully well, and was much admired for her beauty, but one sad morning a stupid servant gave her a large fowl that had died of some disease; whether poor "*Hecate*" took too

much, or it did not agree with her, deponent sayeth not, but she died a few hours afterwards.

One morning last year, while passing above the long valley beyond the Avalanche, on the Banghy Tappal Road, I had a remarkable example of how the grey Jungle fowl of Southern India dread the larger hawks. For the first mile the cocks were crowing cheerfully from almost every clump in the wood on my left, down far below me. Suddenly a magnificent hawk or eagle,—I think the Goshawk, No. 21 of Jerdon,, appeared over the valley, much beneath me of course, but soaring high above the haunts of the Jungle fowl. I watched the grand bird through my glass for sometime; in his range of concentric circles, he must have commanded nearly a mile of the glen. Although there had been so much noise before, beneath him all was now perfectly still; but, when half an hour afterwards, I got beyond his ground the jungle fowl were crowing as lustily as before.

So far I have generally confined myself to the grey jungle fowl of Southern India. I shall now take *Gallus Ferrugineus* or the red jungle fowl of Northern and Eastern India; a less beautiful bird certainly, but (especially the Burmese variety *Gallus Bankiva*, which differs from its red cousin of India merely by being somewhat darker in tint, and having the ear coverts rufous instead of white)—a far more game and lively quarry in a sportsmanlike point of view—for it often rises nearly as freely before dogs or beaters and gives almost as pretty shots as a pheasant would. Jerdon describes the red jungle cock nearly as follows:—"Rich golden hackles on the head, neck, throat and breast, paler on the sides of the neck and posteriorly; ear coverts white; back purplish-brown in the middle, rich orange-brown on the sides, upper tail coverts lengthened, also bright-orange; wings with the lesser and greater coverts black, glossed with green; median coverts rich dull maronne; tail with the central feathers rich glossy-green-

black beneath from the breast unglossed black;" and says further that it is found from the Himalayas southwards on the west of India, as far at all events, as the range of the Vindhian Hills, and also South of the Nerbudda on the Rajpeepla Hills. On the east it occurs through Central India and the Northern Circars, to near the north bank of the Godavery. He did not himself see it further south than the banks of the Indrawutty, not far from its junction with the Godavery, and there both this species and the grey jungle fowl were heard crowing a few yards from each other. He "shot one bird, an undoubted hybrid between the two races," (vol. iii, page 537.) It is as Jerdon says, particularly abundant in the Northern Circars, Goomsoor, the Golcondah Zemindary, &c., and a friend told me—in proof of its being near the Western Ghauts—that when on the march from Coompta to Hurryhur, he saw it close to Sirci, in North Canara.

There is an idea that these fine game birds are the descendants of the domestic poultry of India. Surely this strange notion could not have originated with men who had seen them in their own forest haunts. That, especially in Burmah, one often sees tame (or, *not very wild*, would be a better term) poultry bearing undoubted signs of relationship to their free red cousins of the forest, anyone who knows the latter will admit; but one might as well imagine the sneaking wolf to be the direct lineal descendant of the Knight of the Leopard's "*Roswal*"—*vide* the "*Talisman*" for an account of this noble deer-hound, ye rising generation who know not Walter Scott,—as that the game and blood-looking "*Gallus Ferrugineus*" ever swaggered before a buniah's store of hoarded up and ill-gotten grain, which is the nearest approach to a barn-door this famine-stricken land can furnish.

Red jungle fowl venture much further from the woods than their grey relations. On rounding a turn in the path through any of the Goomsoor, Golcondah Zemindary, or Burmese forests

or looking down from any height on one of the cultivated glades so common in all of those parts, (rude although that cultivation be) the sportsman, or wanderer will often see, during the cold season after the grain is cut, flock after flock, engaged in picking up a morning or evening meal in the stubble far out in the open. He need not attempt to walk up to them however, for they will either get up at once, spot and tantalize him awfully, by flying across the very he would have reached, if he had not been tempted out of his way after them, or before he can get within shot, quietly run before him to the cover. Let him hold steadily on, keeping a little inside the jungle, and sending some one, with a clever dog if possible, to put them up. With fair luck or knowledge of his work, he will thus get as pretty a flying or running shot—often two—as man need ask for. It was once my luck, and with a charge of No. 8 too, to bag no less than *three* fine young cocks in this way. While coming home from snipe shooting, not far from Russelcondah. I remembered that I had during the breeding season often seen an old hen and her chickens run into a particular copse, jutting into some rice-fields, and that the family must have grown up to a rank beyond chickenhood. It was in the muzzle-loading days, and for some reason I did not change my snipe for larger shot, but sending a man into the uncut rice-field, made my way to the corner of the copse. Suddenly some thing bright and red in the still green grass caught my eye, and although the distance was too far for snipe shot to tell with effect on any other part of the bird, I fired at what I felt sure was the head of a jungle-cock, who had stopped to look at me. A tremendous fluttering followed the report; the bewildered brood got up in a vast hurry, and on going to the spot, there were no less than three charming young cocks, full size and fully fed left behind. The poor innocents, running into cover, had put their heads together to ask what was the matter, and had all been hit about their bright red combs. With this exception, I have never heard of

THE GAME BIRDS OF THE HILLS.

more than one jungle-fowl being killed by a single shot; in fact, so wary are these birds everywhere, that any sportsman must feel satisfied if his bag for the day includes one; or at most, a brace. I speak of India in this respect. In Burmah we did a little better; a friend told me that near Pegu, he got seven in one morning. Four was my best bag; this was at Shuaygheen, where, however, in the sixty-one days of November and December, I got sixty-seven jungle-fowls, without having to go more than three or four miles from our little stockade. Even Vagrants have sometimes work to do, and, if I had cared to do so, I could not get out oftener than every second or third morning; besides I am Scotch enough not to shoot on Sundays, so that I seldom returned with only one bird. Most delicious those jungle-fowl were, for they had been feeding on the rice as it ripened, and they were almost all found in the stubble; most were young birds to boot, hatched during the previous spring, and the weather was quite cool enough to allow us to keep them a reasonable time.

As I said before, the Burmese variety gives very pretty shooting, for, especially at this season, the birds often get into some clump or copse, well out in the rice-fields, and when this is beaten, fly readily into the forest, giving as neat chances as any pheasant-shooter need wish for. In hopes that I might do a little for Madras shooting, on leaving Burmah I brought over four very promising specimens, two of each sex, which were placed in Guindy Park. They were almost full grown, and as tame and easy to manage as chickens; but I believe they all died. It is strange that, instead of the white ear-coverts, so very conspicuous in the red birds of India, in the Burmese variety they should be red; thus giving the cock a less striking appearance. An excellent naturalist, who is now, if I am not much mistaken, one of the best contributors to *The Field* told me that the Burmese varieties of many birds found in both countries are darker than the Indian representatives; for

instance, the small crow, *corvus splendens*, found everywhere on the plains of India, and on the Coimbatore and Ootacamund road to within a mile of Kullar, becomes quite black instead of ash-coloured after one gets beyond Arrakan, while the Burmese pea-fowl, the rollers, commonly called blue jays, the paradise fly-catcher, and, perhaps, many others I cannot now think of, are all, after their respective fashions, darker than their Indian cousins.

Writing about Burmese jungle-fowl reminds me of a curious, if not an affecting example of how closely a sitting hen will remain on her nest. While prowling about after large game, through the woods on the banks of the beautiful Boga-tha stream, nineteen miles north of Shuaygheen, and crossing over the still smouldering remains of one of the hot weather fires, so well known to all men acquainted with Eastern forest life. I put up, (or disturbed would be a better term,) a jungle-hen, that ran from my feet fluttering so helplessly, that my gun carrier easily overtook and kicked her over. We found that the wretched bird had many of her feathers freshly singed off, and on going back to the spot she ran from, discovered her nest full of eggs, most of which were scorched by the fire which had destroyed the leaves and dry grass around them. Some earth and the trunk of a fallen tree had sheltered the nest to a certain degree, and perhaps, encouraged the poor mother to risk her life for her nursery that was to be. I can only tell the bare facts of the case; a good writer might make it the subject for a tale of maternal devotion, or an artist for a picture.

Now, friend Editor, I must conclude this prosy scrawl which was commenced before that excellent account of jungle-fowl by ZOOPHILUS, appeared in the *Field*; had it not been, I should not have inflicted it upon you; however, as he, the best authority, except perhaps Jerdon, we have, bears me out in what I have said, the letter shall go.

SMOOTHBORE, may perhaps, like to hear the following story about the baldcoot breeding in India. Many years ago, during February or early in March, while duck-shooting at a large and very little disturbed tank, (name now forgotten) a few miles from Nursipatam, in the Golcondah Zemindary of the Northern Circars,—a feverish quarter, which has left its mark on many of your soldier friends, I wounded a teal that was chased into some floating weeds by a coolie. I distinctly saw a baldcoot rise from this spot, and the man brought me from it several eggs, much resembling those described at page 716 of Jerdon, who says moreover that this bird “makes a large nest, occasionally fixed, at other times of floating weeds.”

Whether the eggs I saw were those of the baldcoot or not, I do not pretend to say, but I certainly think they were..

VAGRANT.

SPUR-FOWL.

After the subject of our last sketch a sportsman's recollections naturally tend towards what Jerdon, at page 541 of his third volume terms “a dwarfed or degraded race of jungle-fowl, peculiar to the continent of India and Ceylon, the so-called Spur-fowl of sportsmen in the South, the double-spurred Partridge of some.

These birds, which are only of the size of Partridges, have no comb nor wattles, but they have nude orbits, quite the port of jungle-fowl, and the sexes differ nearly as much, in which point they do not agree with the Partridge group. They, moreover, frequent woods and dense cover, never coming into the open.”

The scientific name of this bird (*Galloperdix*) fully describes it—for it is half jungle fowl, half partridge in appearance and is generally armed with two spurs on each leg. Jerdon says rightly that the male bird sometimes has three, and occasionally two, on one leg, and one on another; and that the hen

has usually one on each, sometimes absent on one leg, and occasionally two on one, and one on the other. There are two varieties of these pretty little game birds known to Madras sportsmen, the "*rex*" and the "*painte i*" spur-fowl; the former is the bird of the Neilgherries, often brought in by poachers or shot during a beat for jungle fowl or woodcock. The spurfowl does not readily get upon the wing, but when forced to do so, it gives a very pretty and by no means an easy shot, for the bird in its short flight is generally passing amongst thickets and *descending* from the marksman's post ere it dips into covert. While looking for more worthy game among the rocky hills of the Deccan and Central India one often comes upon the painted spur-fowl so close, that, even should we wish to do so, they could not be killed unless by being blown from the muzzle of a gun; they do not remain long in sight however, for they run over the rocks rapidly, although very jauntily, with their tails well cocked up, and, though they be seen again, they remain in view too short a time to enable one to take aim.

Spur, like jungle-fowl take readily to trees when pursued by a dog and from this habit, while at Chikalda, where the red variety abounds, I was enabled to shoot many of these birds although in a more poaching than sportsman-like manner,

One of my most constant companions in forest rambles there, was a large English grey-hound who, in the absence of his own particular sport, took a keen interest in shooting, but, who withal adhered to class prejudices so strongly that although a perfect savage at a worry of his legitimate game, be it hare, fox, or jackal, he disdained to touch a hare when it was shot before him. After seeing me kill a spur-fowl or two he much delighted in giving chase to them as they ran and generally forced them to perch on branches, whence from elevated positions they scolded him emphatically, offering meanwhile very easy pot shots, which were often taken advantage of.

Spur-fowl have never struck me as being particularly wary. It is true that unless when flushed during a "beat" they are seldom shot; but I always fancied this was because the little bird "*per se*" was hardly worth taking much trouble about. In an excellent letter on the zoology of Ceylon, the writer however describes the spur-fowl of that Island as being so wary in its habits that he never heard of one being shot by an European; and that the natives even, although they can generally approach a bird quite inaccessible to a white man, catch them in snares oftner than they shoot them; and, though the spur-fowl may be calling all round, they will, if you offer them a gun, only shrug their shoulders and say, "it's no use." He believed that they have the power of ventriloquising: and termed their call "a sharp reiterated whistle, ascending the gamut and suddenly dropping again." I believe that many birds are ventriloquists: among others, one of the most common, yet least known, of our Indian birds,—the pretty little crimson breasted barbet, whose loud and monotonous note "*took-took*," is at this moment being repeated within a few yards of my chair, and will probably be heard by any one on the plains who may read this article, and who, if he wants to see the performer, has only to mark the tree the note comes from, look at one of the top branches, a bare one for choice, and lo! there will be seen a lovely little green thing, not larger than a sparrow with a breast plate of glittering crimson, edged with gold, shouting in a way wonderful to listen to, and nodding its pretty little head at each call in the most self-satisfied manner. Having once marked the bird, the observer will probably within a few moments have an opportunity of testing its powers of ventriloquism.

I should term the call of spur-fowl a low *cackle* rather than a whistle, but it is difficult to describe sounds by words. I have only once found one of these birds in open ground, and as it was almost the only time killing one has afforded me much satisfaction, the shot may be recorded. While passing over a

low rocky hill between Chicacole and Berhampore, a cock spur-fowl rose almost at my feet, and on being knocked over fell with the ruddy parts of his plumage exposed, and with his red orbits reminded me much of our home red grouse. Except on the Neilgherries, where it can be kept for some days, the flesh of spur-fowl, although well flavoured, is dry and tough.

We come now to the last of the game birds of the hills—the pretty little “*painted bush*” or as it is sometimes termed, the “*black hill*” quail; so abundant near Ootacamund, where it is often seen running rapidly across the path from one garden to another, or rising with much bustle from under one’s horse’s feet. They are most provoking little wretches; getting up in bevies when not required, and insisting upon squatting so as to puzzle both men and dogs when one is prepared for them. Do you, Oh! Editor, want a new pleasure? then get some one to shoot as many of these little birds as he can, have them dipped for a few minutes into *boiling water*, and eat them with melted butter and red pepper; or, better still, green chillies; and if you do not ask him to kill some more, I am very much mistaken. I have never myself seen the large *grey* or European quail on the Hills; but as I know that it is to be found there, it shall be included in this list of game birds; one was killed this year not far from Pykara; another was seen on one of the highest hills near Neddiwuttum: it is a sad pity that they are not more plentiful, for not only are they most delicious birds for the table but they afford the very prettiest small game shooting our Indian sportsman has.

Last season ’68 was particularly good for grey quail near Bangalore, my best bag there was $14\frac{1}{2}$ brace, but they were only taken as a supplement to florikin. In nine days during December I bagged $95\frac{1}{2}$ brace of grey and black breasted quail—Nos. 829 and 830 of Jerdon.

The finest sport of this kind I have seen was in the North-Western provinces, but although they are so abundant there,

and in the Hyderabad country, they are exceeding scarce in the black cotton plains of Nagpore,—a well cultivated grain tract that one would fancy should swarm with them.

Season '68 at Bangalore was also an exceedingly good one for florikin. In about six weeks (shooting only on holidays,) I bagged 49 of these fine birds, making amongst other fair bags, one of nine and three of six birds each.

Here, dear Editor, this list of the Game Birds of the Hills is closed: writing it has been a source of great amusement to me, reading it one of equal grief, for not until a letter appears in hard unalterable print does an untrained scribe know how badly he has done.

My last request for '69 is that you will advocate "*fence-months*" and "*gun taxes*," and exert your mighty power to bring shame on men who murder birds and beasts during the breeding season.

VAGRANT.

YELLOW BIRDS.

Accept, dear HAWKEYE, hearty apologies for delay in responding to your calls, and receive, Gentle Editor, pardon for having owned a devil who, possessed by the malignant spirit of some justly punished poacher—it matters not whether of the days of William Rufus or of William the Fourth for poachers of all days have ever been righteously dealt with—made away with my only copy of draft rules for the preservation, during certain fence or breeding months, of birds and beasts, from the bustard to the button quail, from sambur to the mouse deer, and from nilgai to the gazelle. Excuse for my silence there is not, beyond the usual Vagant's one of dislike to work; but a man cannot keep writing materials up to the mark in a heated oven or a

kettle of boiling water ; and under somewhat similar conditions of the thermometer have my last days been spent, with one short exception, when having wandered into certain mountains I enjoyed myself so much that writing was not to be thought of.

In one of his last letters HAWKEYE mentions a question he put to me many months ago, and which with my reply, I give now, in case SMOOTHBORE or some other scientific ornithologist may throw light on the matter, but before doing so I make over to you, dear HAWKEYE, in return for your question, a puzzler thus given to me by one of the more puzzling sex :—" O Captain " Vagrant, as you know so much about birds, please tell me the " name of one I saw the other day ? I do not remember its " color ; but it was not very large, and it had *a very long bill*, so " *long indeed that it looked just like a parakeet flying back-* " *wards.*" My lovely catechist perhaps alluded to the long tail feathers of the parakeet ; but who can construe the words of women ? However to return to our subject ; HAWKEYE wrote as follows :—

My dear VAGRANT,—Did you ever see or hear of a parakeet of a yellow or canary-colored plumage ? I have one in my possession, regarding the habitat and history of which the enclosed letter will enlighten you. Has Jerdon mentioned anything regarding the variety (as to color) if it be one ? The bird is much about the size of the ordinary green parakeet, the depredator of fruit gardens and grain fields, and common in all parts of India ; it strikes me as more elegant in shape, but I have an idea that this may be attributable to the beauty of its plumage. I see nothing in its eye to indicate its being an albino of its species. The bill is rose-colored, the feet pale yellow, indeed almost white ; its call coincides with that of the common bird, and it certainly is a very beautiful specimen of the genus parakeet as any one would wish to see ; whether it has ever been observed elsewhere I know not. and so apply to you, who know so much about birds in general. and tell us such interesting particulars about them.

You will rejoice with me, at seeing that the Government of India do entertain some idea of adopting measures for the protection of game ; we do not ask for game laws, we only hope for close seasons, or more properly fence months ; the latter will meet all that is required, provided that the fine for breaking the fence be heavy enough to deter the regular poacher and the native shikarry ; that is all we ask of you, my noble sportsman LORD MAYO,—and the sooner you gratify our wish the better. Ever yours, dear VAGRANT,

HAWKEYE.

The enclosed letter said that the bird had been captured near the village of Davalah which is probably not far from the north or north-west borders of the Vizanagram district, where the territories of His Highness approach the Central Provinces. In reply I gave my friend the following extract from *Shaw's Zoology*. As this interesting work may not be generally known, excuse my mentioning it more fully. Much of the information it conveys is now somewhat stale, but many of the descriptions, of birds especially, are most minute and correct. It was published between 1800 and 1819, and the eleven volumes which I possess contain no less than 1,050 plates. Many of these, particularly those of Indian animals, birds, &c., are exceedingly well executed, as are most of the British birds. Some of the others which have evidently been taken from drawings or ill-stuffed specimens are not so successful. I do not know whether a twelfth volume was published; the *natatores* are almost the only birds not described. The eleven volumes are divided thus--

Mammalia 2, Amphibia 1, Pisces 2, Insecta 1, Aves 5.

The extracts are as follows—

JONQUIL PARRAKEET.

This most elegant bird is described and figured as a distinct species in Dr. Latham's second supplement, from a drawing communicated by General Davies, taken from the living bird, which was said to have come from the province of Bahar in Bengal. Its length is about ten inches and a half, its habit that of the Ring-Parrakeet, and the tail very long and slender in proportion: the colour of the plumage is a fine jonquil yellow, paler beneath, but the head of a bright crimson, bounded on the back of the neck by a sea-green collar, narrowing as it approaches forwards, where it meets a white one arising from the sides of the lower mandible; on the shoulders at the bend of the wing, is an oblong red patch, and the bill and legs are flesh-coloured.

SULPHUR PARRAKEET.

Length about fifteen inches, habit that of the Alexandrine Parrakeet, colour uniform pale or sulphur-yellow, rather deeper on the back, bill, legs and feet pale, described and figured by Levaillant from a preserved specimen in a collection at Leyden, uncertain whether a distinct species, or a variety of some other.

Monsr. Levaillant reasons well on the subject of the varieties with respect to plumage which so often takes place in the parrot tribe. All birds in general,

— observes, are subject to become white, as we know from the numerous examples daily before our eyes; even such birds as are naturally of the opposite color as Ravens, Magpies, Black birds, &c. There are also white varieties of Thrushes, Jays, Partridges, Snipes and Woodcocks, Sparrows, Swallows, Martins, and Goatsuckers. It has been imagined that such changes were owing to age; but on the contrary, it is certain that these variations from the genuine colour are always observed to take place in young birds or nestlings, and these birds at their first moulting sometimes recover, either wholly or in part, their proper colours. Neither is this change confined, as it is often supposed, to the birds of Northern climates, but takes place equally in those of Africa and South America. There is however, adds Monsieur Levillant, no example of any kind of the Parrot tribe becoming white or varied with white (exclusive, of course, of the Cockatoos, which are naturally of that colour.) We frequently however observe several of the Parrot tribe to become patched with yellow, and even to become entirely of that colour, however different their natural plumage may have been. We find that throughout nature yellow forms the base of green, which is the prevailing colour of the parrot tribe. Thus the leaves of trees, when fading, or dried, turn yellow. This colour also, according to Monsr. Levillant, is the basis of red; and from the whole he concludes that yellow is to the Parrot tribe what white is to the generality of birds.

To return to the individual above described, or Sulphur Parrakeet, Monsr. Levillant considers it as almost allied to the Rose-Ringed Parrakeet, of which he therefore supposes it may be a variety; though he does not presume absolutely to pronounce it such.

Apropos of this, Jerdon at page 315 of his 1st volume, writes of our well-known green friend, the beautiful little crimson breasted barbet, which is to be found throughout all the plains of India, and if not to be seen, to be heard by any one in them who will take the trouble of listening as he reads this letter for the monotonous, or as ladies would term it, tiresome, call "*took, took, took*" so many have been puzzled by. "Luteous varieties of this species occur occasionally, what Mr. Blyth calls *lutinos*; these are sometimes observed in all normally green birds, as parakeets, &c., analogous to ordinary albinos. The domestic canary-bird is a familiar instance of the kind; the irides and retina appearing red, though in fact colourless, whence the red blood vessels are rendered visible."

I killed an albino of the common red-whiskered bulbul at Tonghoo in Burmah. Skin diseases appear to be common in that country among men, ponies, dogs, elephants and oxen,

owing probably to the damp climate affecting the action of the pores, and it would be interesting to know if birds also are subject to similar complaints, from the same cause. Besides the instance now adduced, I saw, while in Burmah, albino specimens of the mountain sparrow, of the common crow, and of the hill myna. The last was a very handsome bird, and was throughout the whole of 1866, and probably still is, to be seen in China street, Rangoon.

So much for yellow birds : but before concluding, I may as well give thee, O HAWKEYE, the following extract from *Bailey's "Dictionary and Interpreter of Hard Words"* which as the 16th edition was published in 1753, should, if age adds respectability to books as to readers, be an authority old enough to satisfy any one. The bird alluded to is the beautiful golden oriole, or mango bird, to which (Jerdon says) the French name loriot is said to be given, from its call, which is a loud mellow whistle. "LORIOT, a bird that being looked upon by one that hath the yellow jaundice, cures the person and dies himself."

VAGRANT.

THE PRESERVATION OF GAME.

GUTTA CAVAT LAPIDEM.

Although HAWKEYE with his more able pen has taken the good cause in hand, and pointed out the absolute necessity that exists for the introduction of game laws, or some rules for the protection of animals and birds during the breeding season, I venture to hope that even the feeble support I can give may not be despised—for to use the words of some poet,

"Perhaps a recruit
May chance to shoot,
Great General Boney-party."

I write in almost utter ignorance of the hills and the feeling of the Ootacamund public regarding game laws; but as every Briton should be a humane man and should have some idea of fair play, I take it for granted that the introduction of rules for the protection of deer and other game during the breeding months would not be unpopular with Englishmen.

Your humane and able correspondent HAWKEYE has Doctor Jerdon, (vide page 259 of the "Mammals of India") the best authority in this country to support his statement that "sam-bur stags generally shed their antlers during April, and that "the new horn is seldom complete and hard before September."

Surely no man who owns to having sportsman-like feeling would like to be supposed to prefer quantity to quality in what he follows, or to be accused of inhumanity to hinds and fawns. Yet every one who fires at deer during the time just mentioned, or advocates their destruction when out of season, is practically guilty of the error in taste, or of the crime I have spoken of. We all know that the rewards of a sportsman in every clime are sufficient to repay him for the toils he has to undergo in exposure to sun and storm, to the discomforts of all sorts, to the constant failures, to the trials of health and temper, and to the wear and tear of constitution, which are allotted to him. We all know also that rewards are great to the man who is a naturalist, or an enthusiast in scenery,—and what true sportsman is not both of these? If he is a naturalist, even the blindest day as far as "blood" is concerned, can hardly be gone through without his having become acquainted with the manners and customs of some bird or beast; of seeing, though he may not be a botanist enough to know its name, some new or interesting plant or flower, or of revelling in the delight of looking at some "gem" of still life or of landscape, or animal painting by nature, which if it could be transferred to a frame would make the fortune of any artist,

There is a keen enjoyment of real beauty in seeing, as all who have tried their pith on large game must have seen, bits of forest life as they never can be witnessed by any one save a sportsman. These and many others, which to enumerate would take far more space than you Dear Editor would give me and far more time than your readers would bestow upon me, are the rewards of sportsmen in almost every clime, but especially in a tropical one. But yet what are all these rewards without the grim and silent satisfaction of looking over the trophies of skull or claw, tusk or horn, which bring vividly to memory some successful shot, or closely contested struggle for a "spear," some cheery and unselfish comrade, or the gallant way in which some dear old horse answered to the rally with spur and rein which caused "first blood" to crimson the spear blade? Who had a better knowledge of his fellow men than Scott? And when did he show it better than when he spoke of

" The stern joy that warriors feel,
In foemen worthy of their steel?"

How can any one who kills a deer out of season show a trophy in which he has satisfaction, or look back to a shot at a hind without some feeling of shame or sorrow?

As far as sporting emotions go, I do not suppose that there are any more annoying than to find that the splendid looking pair of horns a good stag wears, when he drops to a well planted shot, are in "velvet," and so soft that they are smashed to a bloody pulp in the struggles of the poor brute before he dies. Hungry though a man may be, there can be few cases in India where it can be necessary for him to feed on venison out of season.

For slaughtering a hind when she has her domestic duties to attend to, there can be no reason or excuse brought forward by a sportsman. No sportsman can rejoice at having shot a hind in fawn, or in finding that the meagre looking animal he

has killed is in full milk and must have left a fawn to die of starvation, or to the mercies of wild dogs, jackals, or in some parts of the country, to wolves.

It is not, O Editor! for an unlettered "Vagrant," an indolent and idle "loafer" to suggest details, but surely some scheme like the following would answer.

When Ootacamund is full, which it probably will be about Christmas, have a public meeting to ventilate and consider the reasons *pro* and *con* the protection of game beasts and birds, of fur and feather, during the breeding season. A thorough sportsman like the Commissioner would, whether present or not, surely take an interest in the subject.

I do not suppose that any planter would oppose the measure. Almost all good men and true, who live much in the open air, must be sportsmen at heart, and the certainty that their sport would be doubled during the time that there could be any real pleasure in killing game, should make them willing to spare it during certain close months. As I said in some former letters to you, I do not know any thing about the cultivation of coffee, but I do know something about Natural History : and I know, as any man who has shot in the Northern Circars or in Burmah must, that a very slight fence of wood, or even a string dotted with tufts of feathers, will keep deer from any-thing except water; and, surely, such a fence cannot be difficult or costly to put up. Deer will scramble or jump over, or into, much as a cat would, any bank, wall, or ditch. These are the only fences which should cost much money to construct. The very trees and underwood about the edges of a clearing should, when thrown together in a line, form an object so regular, therefore so unlike the rest of the ground, that it would at once rouse the suspicions of deer sufficiently to keep them out of a field.

As to the damage done in plantations by deer, it is not for me in my ignorance to speak. Of the value of "hear-say" as

evidence, we are all aware; but I have been told on the personal authority of one of the chief planters on the hills that, as "Hawkeye" says, sambur only touch one species of chinchona. "Hawkeye" says, and from what he writes, he must be too good a naturalist not to be relied upon, that they never touch tea or coffee. So far for the feelings of Britons on the subject. With regard to natives, all the ideas, records and legends of the people of India are in favor of the right of the governing power, for the time being, to preserve game by laws far more arbitrary and stringent than any we should issue.

Game laws therefore, I urge, would be received by the natives without a murmur, and as the people themselves, unless led astray by ill-disposed white men, would not have any idea of breaking these laws, they could not only be issued, but enforced, without hardship to any one or any temptation to crime. The rules need be very simple: merely to prevent any one from selling certain game animals or birds, dead or alive, or their flesh, at any time without a license; or killing or snaring such animals, or birds, during certain close or breeding months, which would (I speak in this case of India generally) of course vary slightly in different districts, and which should therefore be fixed by local authorities. We have at home fixed dates for killing certain kinds of game. It should therefore, (as far as a "Vagrant" can see,) be easy to do the same in India. All laws of trespass should be enforced. Every gun, or rather every soul, (large or small, white or black, head of a family or school boy, shikarry or dog boy,) who fires a gun at bird or beast, should of course be taxed and so should dogs of every kind, of all sorts and descriptions, without one exception, pet or pointer, hound or house dog—all, whether

"Mongrel, puppy, whelp, or hound,
Or cur of low degree."

should add to the revenue or die.

The detestable semi-ownerless dogs of this country are so great a nuisance that each year rewards are paid for their destruction. Tax every canine animal without exception, and it seems reasonable to suppose that dogs should not only add to, instead of taking from, the public purse; but that the public individually and collectively, should derive pleasure from the tax. A few years ago, one of the greatest pleasures of coming to these glorious hills, was the feeling of having left India so far behind that the very voices of the dogs were English, for every canine note one heard had somewhat of the deep and honest bay of a dog at home, and therefore most unlike the miserable and yelping snarl of the *almost*, I much fear not *quite*, irrepressible red pariah. Now matters are changed. I believe that in '63 a man might have gone from the West end of the Ootacamund lake to the toll on the Coonoor ghaut without seeing one real undiluted pariah. Now the brutes are in dozens, and although they are too despicable to afford much aid to poachers, yet other mongrels are not, so that one and all should be taxed. And now O dear Editor, pray accept my apologies for having taken up so much of your valuable time. When I commenced, I intended to have tried to prove, that not only was it sin or shame to kill certain beasts out of seasons, but that for the sake of profit, for £. s. d., certain insectivorous birds and beasts should also be protected; but if I have put in the thin end of the wedge, some more powerful arm, better trained how to strike than my weak and indolent one, may perhaps drive it home.

At any rate please take notice that I am about the most lazy man of your acquaintance, and that I won't fight, nor will I argue; there if I have unintentionally roused to action any of your correspondents, you must fight my battles for me, or drop me without hesitation. Like the Scot of old, I "love better to hear the lark sing than the mouse cheep;" and pen, ink and paper are always serious drawbacks to the pleasures of a

VAGRANT.

I take the liberty of entering the following extract from *The Pioneer*, June 16th, 1870, which expresses in far better language than most of us could use our feelings on this matter.

Last year the Government took over all official India, a sort of Plebiscitum on the question of preserving wild animals, especially birds. We believe that the first signal of a crusade against wanton destruction of these creatures was given from the Neilgherry Hills, where some of the best sportsmen in India of that school which blends sport with science in just proportion, exchange genial notes and queries in the SOUTH OF INDIA OBSERVER. And we may remark parenthetically, that the best Indian sporting books have hitherto issued from Madras, though the reason is not obvious; for though the backwoods may develop sporting tastes, they do not usually develop literary culture and picturesque insight.

We can understand leather stockings wandering peacefully in the primitive wilds of Madras, far from the busy hum of Bombay or Bengal civilization, but why should the South-Indian Hawk's-eye wield his pen as skilfully as his spear or gun? We can comprehend, again, that the social condition of that Presidency may be favorable to a wandering life, but why should the notorious Vagrant of the Blue Mountains take to writing letters with a strong game flavour in the local press? However, to return from this digression.

On the Neilgherries the signal was given, and the torch lit, which has passed from hand to hand round all India. The Government took up the idea, and at its word came all manner of reports, statistics, suggestions, and denunciations, from the numberless sportsmen who serve the State—the Press cast the subject into its winnowing machine and forth rushed a full stream of corn and chaff—indignant sporting protests, scientific lamentations, excellent practical hints, utterly preposterous proposals, blessings on Lord Mayo, and anathemas upon Captain B. Rogers. The sporting man, pure and simple, took, we must own, a rather narrow view of the matter in hand; he showed some symptoms of an expectation that our noble Viceroy intended to turn all India into a glorious game preserve, making the life of a tiger, and (of course) of a hog, as sacred as are pheasants and foxes in England, and this eager jubilation of mere shooting men gave some advantage to the Philistines. For the FRIEND OF INDIA struck in with an article against Feudalism, and argued with irritating perversity against the revival of the old game laws of the West. We have really no desire to be unjust, but we are certain that only out of a mind deeply tainted by early Cockneyism would proceed the conception that the Government Circular about the preservation of Birds was a “step toward Feudalism.”*

We need not explain to our readers that the real question raised for discussion last year was not whether birds and beasts should be preserved for the purpose of sport, but whether the Government is justified in permitting many beautiful species of creatures to be exterminated by the selfish greed of one generation of men. All the information collected from every part of India confirms the apprehension that the *feræ naturæ* are very rapidly diminishing throughout this

great country, except in the wilds and the deepest jungles, which unluckily shelter mostly those kinds which ought especially to be destroyed. The more beautiful and valuable birds and beasts suffer most—against them the vigorous young Anglo-Saxon wages fell and indiscriminate war the whole year round; the breech-loader is never silent, and spares neither age nor sex. And not only does the exuberant energy and boundless leisure of young Anglo-India find vent in this wholesale slaughter, but the real army of sportsmen is followed by a motley herd of pot-hunters,—men who are aptly stigmatized as FLESHERS by the indignant hunters of Madras,—men who would shoot a fawn to make sauce for its mother; while in the rear even of these comes a scandalous crew of vicarious pot-hunters, elderly gourmands, and “fat chuffs” (as Falstaff would say,) who keep two or three low fellows to wander constantly about the woods with an old gun, and to slay mercilessly any creature wherewith a Briton may fill his stomach inexpensively. To these should be added numberless hordes of native gipsy poachers, who will clear off a whole district by net and snare, and adventurers of all nationalities who live by selling skins and feathers for the ever widening Europe market. Remember also that no one takes the trouble, as in England, to keep down the smaller beasts and birds of prey,—the wild cat, weasel, jackal, hawk and kite,—and some idea may be conceived of the perils which now environ any animal which can be killed without danger, yet with profit.

Now, we do not propose here to go over the whole argument in favour of obliging people to show some mercy to harmless and valuable creatures whose organization is as exquisite as our own, and whose loss, if it is once caused, cannot possibly be replaced. We believe that the papers now with Lord Mayo prove conclusively, at least in regard to birds, that many precious species are in a fair way toward extinction, and that the result of such extinction may be directly harmful. We take these conclusions to be established; and we now ask whether the collective opinions of all those who understand the question do not say unanimously that this process of extirpation ought to be stopped, and can easily be stopped. There is no need of more talking about the matter we have only to follow the example just set in England, where a law has been passed to protect sea-birds, and is now in full force, as a prosecution for killing sea-swallows [mentioned in the last Home Papers] has shown. We have but to ask Mr. Whitley Stokes to draft a short Act establishing fence months—a period within which certain birds, to be specified by their kinds in the schedule appended to the Act, may not legally be slain. There is no taint of Feudalism or game preserving about this. Within this fixed period the shooting of a bustard (for instance) will be an offence just as the strangling of a baby is an offence, only under a sharper penalty, all the year round. If there is any one who can show any just cause or impediment why such a law should not pass, let him speak—for we know of no conceivable drawback to the obvious justice and expediency of such a measure. We do not allow everybody who wants wood for use or profit to cut down all the forests; why should we permit anybody who likes flesh or feathers to exterminate the birds? And we may add that the upper classes of natives would advocate, to a man, the cause of humanity toward animals; the reform would be entirely congenial to their tastes and creed, while it would clash with none of their prejudices.

Regarding this article HAWKEYE writes—

I observe in your last issue an extract from the PIONEER, on the Preservation of Birds, in which the writer compliments the style of the sporting contributors in this Presidency, and cannot see the reason why they should excel in that particular line. I am glad to see how well he advocates what we have been so long seeking, and which is now apparently on the threshold of realization—the preservation of game. It is however useless for him to say that such preservation is not for the express object of sport; it eventually becomes so, the birds and beasts are not to be exterminated. they are to live and multiply, and so they will. Well, at certain seasons they may be taken by gun or snare or other device, and so the sportsman—he of the gun—enters the field, has his enjoyment and his sport, and thanks Lord Mayo that it is so. The article is an excellent one, the reasons sound and strong, and if the Act follows, then will all sportsmen good and true, give three cheers for the PIONEER.

HAWKEYE.

• THE BIRDS OF AN INDIAN CANTONMENT.

My last letter should have included among the "*Raptores*," No. 2, the "*Black Vulture*," which I have seen sailing lazily over the upper Fort. Unattractive as are the habits of this fine bird, and others of the same family, no one can question the benefits man derives from vultures, while their grand flight alone entitles them to our respectful admiration.

What wonderful things these birds must see, what strange mysteries of love or hate, of courage or of crime, of deeds good or evil, in sadly unequal portions,—few of the former, so many of the latter—it is to be feared, their marvellously keen eyes must gaze on! They are not pleasant company, however, so no more of them, except that I am a determined believer that they find their food by sight, not by scent; and cordially endorse all HAWKEYE has said regarding them; also, that on two occasions I have found them mangling a still breathing bullock, which had fallen from weakness or disease. It is, I trust, needless to say that in both instances, although the poor brutes must have been utterly insensible to pain, a bullet forthwith stopped further breathing.

* The first chapter of these notes has been lost.

But we shall pass on to the next family, the “
 “Wnat bird was that?” said a brother Sub to my Ooriah gun-carrier, long ago. “That, Sir,” was the reply, “is a bird that sits on a tree.” In the hot-blooded conceit of youth, thinking the habit he mentioned was characteristic of too many birds to be worth ought in description, we held the man up to ridicule. Yet, honest Dunoo, (good luck be with you, Dunoo, wherever you may be, for a more plucky, hardy, willing, good-tempered and keen-eyed henchman no sportsman need wish for) was right after all, for he intended to say that it was not an imperial pigeon, or a jungle fowl, but one of the *Insessores*, or *Perching* birds, which include nearly three-quarters of the feathered creation; or, as numbers mean every-thing in these days, 689 of the 1,008 Indian varieties in Jerdon’s book. All the birds we first knew as children are among them,—the swallows that build in our houses, the ill-brought-up parrots, that having been allowed when at school to keep bad company, give us our first lessons in bad language, (therefore, madam. send your boys to the best public school you can think of, if only to learn good manners, which, believe me, go a great way in making after life glide smoothly,) black-birds and thrushes, wrens and robins, which, thank Heaven, turn the scale of our youthful notions to the proper side, and teach us a great deal of kindness.--canaries, the best known of our tame, and gold-finches, by far the prettiest of our wild birds; sparrows and larks, rooks and magpies, are all of the great order of “*Insessores*,” or “*Perching Birds*.”

But to return to Bellary. No. 85, the “*Mosque Swallow*,” is to be found there; so is No. 90, the “*Dusky Crag Martin*,” a hill loving bird, which might well avoid such dull quarters, for I have killed it near Pykarra on the Neilgherries, and at Chikalda,—a very charming little summer retreat for the inhabitants of Berar. And, friend HAWKEYE, what do you think?

of the grand swift, No. 98, the "*Alpine Swift*," at times so abundant on the Neilgherries, having taken a look at Bellary? Jerdon says that he discovered one roosting-place of this swift on the magnificent precipices at the falls of Gairsoppa; and that there, "especially on the cliffs on each side of the great fall, "above 900 feet perpendicular height, these swifts were congregated in vast numbers; and from the way in which some of "them remained about the cliffs at all times of the day, I have "little doubt but that they breed here. Is it possible that all "the Alpine Swifts that traverse the South of India with such "amazing speed, meet here nightly for roosting, and for breeding "in their appointed season; or are there other similar places of "resort for them along the chain of the Western Ghats? However this may be my own impression, from long observation "on the west coast of India, is, that such of these swifts as have "been questing at great distances from their roosting haunts, "fly first towards the coast, and then make their way along the "sea-side, picking up stragglers from other regions on their way "to the cliffs of Gairsoppa, or other similar precipices."

About sunset on the 30th of August, I saw a small flock of very large swifts, apparently of this species, passing south-west over the Bellary fort: were they going to sleep at Gairsoppa, which must be at least one hundred and fifty miles, even by the short cuts they would take? and at what hour would they reach home? They were flying so low that I might have killed one from the gallery of the racquet court; but all going very steadily in the same direction, although some of them—the young people perhaps, appeared to be killing time by hawking at insects by the way. My attention was first attracted by their peculiar and somewhat harsh screams. The last time I saw them was at Chikalda, the pleasant station aforesaid.

We must now pass on to No. 112, the "*Common Indian Night Jar*." The peculiar note of this bird might often be heard close to my house at Bellary, although I do not remem-

ber having seen it. It is nearly nocturnal in its habits and one might pass close to where it is squatted, without being aware of its vicinity, unless it is accidentally flushed. It is often known as the "*Ice Bird*," from its note, which is somewhat like the sound of a stone sliding rapidly over ice.

Why the "*Goat-suckers*" are placed amongst the "*Insessores*" or "*Perching Birds*" puzzles me, for they seem unable to perch on small twigs, although they can squat on the larger limbs, just as they would on a wide wall or on the ground. Jerdon himself writes, "they perch on branches, not across them, for "their feet are not suited for grasping, but in the direction of "the branch."

That charming little bird, No. 117, the "*Common Indian Bee Eater*," or as it is sometimes termed, the "*Green Fly-catcher*," is not as abundant at Bellary as at most other Indian stations, but is often to be seen, and is as familiar with mankind as in other places. Like many other birds, it has found out that a telegraph wire makes an admirable perch. While a bee-eater is perched and looking round for his prey, shot after shot from a pellet-bow may whiz close to the bird, who, attracted by what he evidently mistakes for the hum of some insect, will merely turn his head and eagerly watch the ball as it flies from him. His handsome and larger relative, No. 118, the "*Blue-tailed Bee-eater*," may sometimes be found among the rice fields, and marshy ground near Gooty.

Now comes the best known of our Indian beauties, although we invariably call him by his wrong name, No. 123, the "*Indian Roller*," or as we insist upon calling it the "*Blue Jay*." This bird would be very abundant and familiar every where, were it not for the war waged on it by the more mischievous sex. Yes, ladies, whatever you may say, you are not only cruel yourselves, but the cause of all the cruelty men are guilty of. Not long ago a man told me, expecting applause, that he had succeeded

in purchasing two dozen and two skins of Blue Jays to send home, and wondered why so few of these birds could be found near the Cantonment! While at Kamptee I remember seeing on a "Gooler," or country fig tree, close to my window, at the same time, a Roller, a Golden Oriole in full plumage, a flock of Parrots, and one of the lovely little Crimson breasted Barbets, altogether making as beautiful a group of gaily tinted animal life as one need wish to watch. Where they are not bullied, Rollers (or Jays let us call them) become very bold, and so does their cousin the *Burmese Roller*, although Jerdon remarks that this species is decidedly more wary and less familiar than the Indian one; and so it is, wherever the Chinamen have a chance of getting them shot, to export their wings for fans; but, in the military cantonment of Rangoon, they were the tamest and most familiar birds we had; and were constantly in my verandah. The Burmese Rollers are so like their Indian relations, that unless forewarned by such observant teachers as Blyth and Jerdon, an ordinary sporting naturalist would not remark the difference.

One cannot expect to see *Kingfishers* where there is so little water as at Bellary, but No. 134, our little Indian beauty, is doubtless to be found somewhere near the place; a skin of No. 129, the white breasted bird, was brought to me from the Toongabuddra.

Very few of No. 148, the "*Rose-ringed Parrakeet*," are to be seen at Bellary; it is difficult to account for this, for, as Jerdon says, they frequent the barest and least wooded parts of the country; unless indeed we bear in mind that, in a parrot the cranium is very large, and that they have great intelligence. To a lover of ornithology there can be few more pleasing sights than to see, as any one may during the season at Kamptee, the ground covered, as with a thick green carpet, by a flock of these beautiful birds closely packed under a "neem" tree devouring the fallen berries. They are not an equally

pleasant sight however to gardener or husbandman, when they fall on fruit or grain, and, utterly regardless of abuse, slings or rattles, eat so fast that they even forget to talk.

Did you ever, O Editor! hear a parrot talk broad Scotch? Once upon a time I got from the barracks of a Scotch regiment, one of the large Alexandrine Parrakeets, with the dark red spot on the shoulders of the wings. A most accomplished bird she was; discreet, moral and trustworthy, having been brought up by a Scotchman, but to any one raised south of the Tweed most of her language was incomprehensible. The way in which she imitated a bashful Lothian lover, (yes, Scotchmen are sometimes shy—very often in fact, Madam,) appealing for a good word from the dreaded parent of his beloved, and the encouraging way in which he was received, was a comfort to any one about to marry. In due course of time this Polly visited England, but whether she there forgot the kindly Scotch tongue, or, like the sailor's parrot, "on the voyage home learn to curse, swear and tell lies like a Christian," deponent knoweth not. It is wonderful how birds imitate well-known voices; I remember one of the common grey African Parrots that called servants in the voices of his master or mistress as the fancy pleased him, but apparently from sheer mischief, always at the wrong time; and an old Bengalee chum of mine must, if he ever reads this paper, remember our famous Rangoon Myna, that would call my orderlies up one flight of stairs with my voice, and his Madras servant,—“Doorga,” I think was the man's name,—up another with his, within a few minutes. That was a wonderful Myna, full of conversational powers and perfectly trustworthy, as long as he spoke out, but (he had been educated in barracks) every now and then he whispered softly, and at such times he was to be avoided, for he was then obscene in the superlative degree, and muttered curses not loud but deep. There must have been a grim spice of distorted and wicked humour about the reprobate who was

schoolmaster to the bird, for the pupil must have taken aback and startled many, who, trusting to his loudly expressed sentiments of good fellowship and hospitality, listened to his awful whisperings.

But all this is very far from the birds of Bellary, and we must make a long skip to No. 197 the *Crimson-breasted Barbet* perhaps the most often heard, while it is the least often seen, of our Indian birds. I have met many Britons and East Indians,—the latter a race singularly unacquainted with the manners and customs of the wild things about them,—who set down the call of this bird to some unknown insect. How soon English school-boys would find him out! The fact is, if the little beauty is not intentionally a ventriloquist, circumstances make him one, and, as when he utters his shout, (how loud it is for so small a creature,) “*took, took, took, took,*” he is generally perched on the top of some tree, between the listener and the sun, the performer, not so large as a sparrow, is a green atom beyond green things, and as Jerdon with his usual minuteness, says “the sound often appears to come from a different direction to that from which it does really proceed; and this “appears to depend on the direction of the bird’s head when uttering the call,” few people know where, or for what, to look, so the search is given up forthwith. There are a few of these birds about the western side of the Bellary Fort, where there are some good trees, but not many in other parts of the parched up station. A pair bred in one of the cross-beams of a vinery close to my house.

VAGRANT.

HOG-DEER AND HOG-HUNTING.

Now for SMOOTHBORE'S and HAWKEYE'S questions about Hog-deer. I cannot find any authentic proof that *Axis porcinus* has ever been found in Southern India, although Jerdon says that "it has been stated to inhabit South Malabar." His informant probably alluded to the pretty little mouse-deer, *Memima Indica*, which from its somewhat inelegant action and resemblance in color and stripes, or spotted markings, to a very young wild pig, has caused Madras Sportsmen to persist in erroneously terming it the "*hog-deer*," a name that should only be applied to the porcine axis, which is—hear, O brother sportsmen of the South!—merely a clumsy spotted deer with smaller horns and with hardly any spots. It will be long, however, before our Madras Sportsmen, will call the mouse-deer by its proper name.

I can corroborate Jerdon's statement, *vide* page 263 of his book, that young "hog-deer are *beautifully spotted*;" but although I must have seen many adult specimens, dead and alive, while in Burmah, I do not remember having remarked the few white spots which, he says, many of them assume in summer, I think that the fawns lose their white spots when they are about six months old. There was (perhaps still is) a very interesting hybrid between the porcine and spotted axis in the People's Park at Madras.

In 1865 I sent from Rangoon to Madras a pair of very fine hog-deer, which were unfortunately sent to the paddock in the People's Park, instead of, as I hoped, being set at liberty to breed in the Government Park, at Guindy. The experiment would not only have been an interesting one to a naturalist, but from the excellent cover Guindy Park affords, and its great extent, one almost certain to have succeeded. On the hog-deer being put into the paddock, the male was killed by a spotted stag, which appropriated the female; the hybrid fawn just

mentioned was the result, and the little hind was in fawn again to the same stag when she died. The young hybrid, a female, I think, was of a darker color than the sire, with fainter spots; she carried her head low, like her porcine mother, and thus ran with the back apparently much arched; the ears struck me as being larger than those of a spotted fawn of about the same age or size. It will be interesting to note whether this little hybrid will continue to interbreed with her spotted relations. The hog-deer, when in proper condition, affords excellent venison; and when I first knew Shuaygheen on the Sittang river in Pegu, a place where mutton was not to be had, this venison and that of sambur, and perhaps, of the bow-antlered rusa, under the name of sambur, were almost the only changes from the daily ration beef, or fowls, our caterer could procure for the little detachment-mess, which we established in the pretty but unhealthy stockade in which we were quartered. When in long grass, hog-deer appear to squat as closely as a hare does. While snipe or jungle-fowl shooting in Burmah, I have, on different occasions, walked almost on to hog-deer, which must have heard me firing near them, without moving from their forms until they could not avoid doing so. When hunting is introduced into Burmah, as I feel sure it will be, ere many years, hog-deer will, I doubt not, give many a run before mounted spearsmen and grey-hounds.

HAWKEYE, or some of your readers who have been in that country, may remember the Burmese name for hog-deer: my acquaintance with that language was very limited, but the word sounded like "*dee-ay* or *dree-ay*." One feels now-a-days, afraid to spell any Oriental name; but is not *Rangoon* more strictly Oriental than *Puna* or *Usur*, O most learned Editor?

I remember the picture of deer-hunting that HAWKEYE mentions: where can a copy of that highly-colored and quaint old book "*Williamson's Oriental Field Sports*" now be obtained? If any of your readers can put me up to this, through you, they will much oblige VAGRANT.

The hog-deer is, a friend tells me, very abundant in Sindh, where it is called the "*Para*." Why will Indian sportsmen insist upon using native terms, which vary with every district, when writing or speaking of animals that have well defined names in natural history?

HAWK-EYE and DEER-STALKER shall hear about antelope in my next letter. What has become of the DODABETT CROW? Did he see in the *Pioneer* or the *Times of India*, an account of a free fight with a boar, during which a camel broke its leg, a horse was badly cut, and a dog named "Stumps" distinguished himself? the letter referred to was not written by me, but I was present during the battle. That Christmas meet of our hunt was a stirring one; 14 pigs were killed; but in the list of casualties were two horses badly ripped, another so severely injured during a run that he was shot the same afternoon, a fourth, having picked himself up after a fall before his rider did, was lost for a fortnight, and nearly starved when recovered, a camel being upset and cut by a charging pig, broke its leg in the fall and was shot on the ground; ordinary spills and accidents from thorns or stones were not taken into account. We trust to the cold steel in our county, O CROW of DODABETT, it has not been a bad thing to rely on, for last season's bag has been the best, both as to size and number of pig, in the records of the hunt.

The letter alluded to is given below, the fight is well described by my friend SPORT

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "PIONEER."

SIR,—The question raised by your correspondent NORTH WESTER as to the height of boars, is one in which I as well as many others in these provinces, have long been interested, and I hope it may be freely ventilated in your columns.

We measure their height in our club at the shoulder, from the wither perpendicularly to the heel of the foot, not the toe, which would give an inch or an inch and a half more, and the largest mentioned in the records of our Hunt Club is a 36-incher. There are a good many between 34 and 36, but the average height recorded is only about 31, and during some years' residence in these provinces, whilst shooting in big jungles, I have never seen a pig I would have

judged to be over this in size. I have, however heard of them, and have seen the 10 inch tusks of one which was described to me as being the trophies of a 40 incher, and I believe this to be true, as the tusks of those I have mentioned have never exceeded nine inches.

Our country is, however, unfavorable for harboring the old and lusty boars in rideable grounds, consisting, as it does, of grass runnahs of small extent, and patches of cover on the banks of streams, never sufficiently undisturbed to content the solitary boar (for it is rarely the largest that is to be found with the sounder,) and though these covers are full of pig in the cold season, by the end of February they are all cut and dried up.

For cunning I will back our pig against the North-Western ones, and for pluck they'd not give in to those of Bengal; they run as long as they think running gives a chance of escape, but once they see it is futile, they charge till they die! The country too is favorable for their running; these small covers are never far distant (generally half mile to a mile and a half) from the big jungles; the ground is cut up with nullahs, often precipitous, while thick "babool" bushes, and holes peculiar to our cotton soil, agreeably vary the chances of all, so the boar that does not stay to fight is, by no means, a fool. Our experience has shewn us that those under 30 inches beat us for the most part, and those over, being heavier and slower, we spear. I will add to this the description of one who, fighting and running, beat us in both.

Last Christmas-day we beat a Sind bund (date grove) that branched in two directions, and posted ourselves at the head of one branch under some mangoe trees, (our vision being limited we post men in trees with flags to point which way the pig may break,) a boar was signalled as having broken back and riding about half a mile—the chase commencing with a pretty water jump that brought two of our party to grief—we came on the boar just as he was breaking out and of course in again he went. For about an hour he led us a life, making feints of breaking at various points, obliging us to cross and re-cross the difficult and boggy nullah along which the cover winds at last coming out with us close in pursuit near to our original post, and he just succeeded in getting into some thick bushes at the end of the first field in time! We put "Stumps" in to turn him out, which the plucky little dog did so effectually that the boar broke out with a rush straight at one of our party, who found his horse badly ripped behind, before he had time to put down his spear, the boar again retiring into some mox bush cover close by. "Stumps" not being successful in dislodging him from this second retreat, another of our party with a shot gun mounted on a camel (we had no elephants) came up, the camel advanced bravely "where ignorance is bliss, &c.," but the boar charging straight at its legs completely routed the whole arrangement, knocked over and ripped the camel (which broke its leg in falling) and then made away across some Dhal fields, getting some quarter of a mile start unperceived, whilst we were wofully contemplating the success of his last attack. On our coming up he charged at once and was speared twice, the second time carrying the spear with him into another piece of bush cover. Making sure he could not escape we dismounted and beat through the cover to kill him with our spears, but the boar had slipped away through some long grass down a nullah, and was never seen again.

This was I think, a good instance of pluck and cunning combined.
Kamptee, Central Provinces.

SPORT.

This boar's savage charge at the camel was within a few yards of all of us, for every one was trying to incite him to come forth : after his headlong rush out of the bush he reared so upright in his attempt to reach his clumsy disturber, which was quite frantic with deadly fear, that he succeeded in ripping it in, what in a horse would be termed, the stifle joint. The poor brute rolled over in its agony, smashed one of its legs in the fall and was of course shot. Luckily the rider, one of the best known among the Nagpore hunt, was not hurt.

In his notes on "The Mammals of India," Dr. Jerdon has rather under-estimated the size of the wild hog.

From the records of the Nagpore hunt of which I am at present a member, I find, that of the last twenty-five boars speared, seventeen measured 31 inches and more, in height at the shoulder ; of these seventeen, one was $35\frac{1}{2}$, one $34\frac{1}{2}$, three were 34, and five, 33 and $33\frac{1}{2}$ inches. The largest boar on the books of the present hunt up to this date, (March 1870) measured 36 inches at the shoulder, 76 in length, tail included ; 54 in girth, the next in size were 35 and $35\frac{1}{2}$ inches in height.

Of the last twenty-five sows, for here we are sometimes obliged to hunt them, fourteen measured 30 inches and more at the shoulder, of these one was 33, there are also, but not included in the above list, two sows of 32 and two of 31 inches each. The hunt rule for measuring pigs is from withers to heel (not toe) much in the way a horse is measured, and the same sort of standard is used with very few exceptions, such as when a pig is killed too late in the evening, or too far from the tents to be worth bringing in ; the height is then taken on a couple of spear shafts which are afterwards measured.

The following are the dimensions of a boar speared at Seroor, in the Wurdah district, on the 12th of March 70.

Height $34\frac{1}{2}$ inches ; length, taken in profile from nose to root of tail, 5 feet and half an inch, and along the back, 8 feet 2 inches, length of tail not including long bristles at end, $11\frac{1}{2}$ inches, girth 4 feet 6 inches, tusks $7\frac{3}{4}$ inches.

Jerdon does not over-estimate the speed and courage of a wild hog ; no one can form a correct idea of the former who has not tried to spear one on rocky ground where he has not become too fat to gallop.

Since the above was written a 37 incher has been recorded in the hunt annals,

VAGRANT.

I did not intend to have inflicted another letter upon you for months, gentle Editor : this shall be as short as possible ; that it is written at all you must blame CLOOTITEAL, not your present correspondent.

It is with great hesitation that one ventures to express an opinion in the least degree opposed to that given by a writer so successful in woodcraft as must have been CLOOTITEAL, who tells us in the *Observer* that he has shot as much game in Burmah and on the Neilgherries "as any sportsmen now either in India or elsewhere ;" but he will, it is to be trusted, pardon my assuring him that the animal referred to by me as the hog-deer is *Axis Porcinus*, No. 222, page 262 of Jerdon's *Mammals*, the *Porcine Deer* of Pennant, the *Cerfcochon* of Cuvier, and the *Brown Porcine Axis* of Sir William Jardine ; and that the little Ghee of Burma is *Cervulus Aurcus*, No. 223 of Jerdon, the *Muntjao* or *Kakur*, *rib-faced* or *barking deer*. Give it any of these names you like, but not that of *jungle sheep*—the popular but erroneous one accorded to the little animal throughout Southern India.

For a better account of the muntjac than I can give, see HAWKEYE'S description in the *South of India Observer* of the 24th September 1868. It is perhaps the most generally diffused and best known of the eastern deer, for it extends from the Himalayas to the extreme south, from a low level to the snows, from our western presidency to Java, if not indeed to China. If there be a difference between the muntjac of India and that of Java, the specific distinctions are so slightly marked that naturalists do not yet seem to have decided what they are.

The very remarkable structure of the muntjac's horns which spring from an elevated pedestal covered with hair, sufficiently separate him from all other deer; and this, combined with his long canine teeth, in which, however, he approaches the musk deer backed up probably by his wonderful voice and the somewhat malignant expression of his oddly ribbed face, led to a curious mistake on the part of one of the ancient fathers of eastern travel; but of this anon. I certainly have never heard the term *hog-deer* applied to the muntjac (have either of you, O HAWKEYE or SMOOTHBORE?) but Jerdon says, *vide* page 264 of his *Mammals*, that in Ceylon, it is called the *red hog-deer*. Why this name has there been given to an animal differing so widely from the true porcine axis, it is difficult to say, except that many foresters who should be excellent out-door naturalists will not take the trouble to think of the fascinating subject when at home. But to return to our *Ancient Father* of travel, sport and natural history.

Dr. John Francis Gemelli Careri, in his account of a "Voyage round the world," gives the following quaint description of some of the animals observed by him during his stay in *Indostan*. The adventurous doctor landed in January 1695, (Mr. Nathaniel Higginson was then Governor of our Fort Saint George, at that time not a very extensive command, for only nine months before it obtained possession of the "neighbouring towns of Egmore and Parsewaukum,") at Daman, then

a city belonging to the *Portugeses*, now the road to which is one of the stations on the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway. He says :—" Daman is also very famous for all sorts of Game ; for besides all the *European* Creatures of wild Boars, Wolves, Foxes, and Hares ; in the Mountains there are those they call *Baccarreos*, in shape like Bucks, and in taste like Swine ; *Zambares*, whose bodies are like Oxen, and their Horns and Feet like those of a Stag ; *Gazelles*, which are like Goats ; *Dives*, like Foxes ; *Roses*, with the body like a Cow, so called from a Rose they have on the Breast ; the Male of this Species is called *Meru*, and has Horns half a Span long, and the Body and Tail like a Horse ; Wolves like Stags with hairy Horns ; *European* Stags ; black wild Cats, with Wings like those of the Bats, with which they Skip and Fly from Tree to another, tho' they be far distant ; wild Horses and Cows. There are three sorts of Tygers, call'd *Bibo*, *Cito*, and the Royal ; each differing from the other in bigness of Body, and variety of Spots. It being their Property to be continually in search of wild Boars, these taught to defend themselves by Nature, tumble in the Mire and dry themselves in the Sun so often, till the mud is crusted hard on them. Being thus arm'd, instead of being made a Prey, they often gore the Tygers with their sharp Tusks ; for they, working with their Claws on the hard Mud, are a long time pulling it off, and by that means give the Boars time to kill them.

" The *Portuguesses* have two ways of killing Tygers, one is lying conceal'd in a Ditch, near the Water where they come to Drink ; the other going in a Cart drawn gently through the Wood by Oxen, and then shooting them. But they use all their endeavours to hit them on the Forehead, for if the Tyger falls not the first Shot, it grows so enrag'd with the Hurt that it certainly tears the Hunter in pieces."

Does not this delicious account, dear HAWKEYE, bring to recollection many of the grim and outlandish creations of

heraldry or fiction? It is easy however to recognize most of these. *Boccareos* must be the little four-horned antelope, the Central India term for which, *bekra* or *bhirkee*, is corrupted by us Madrasses into jungle sheep, and applied as aforesaid to the muntjac; how they appeared to taste like swine is not so easily explained. *Zambares* does not ill describe our glorious sambur: by the way I have a head for the Madras Museum with 39-inch horns, weighing (only an atom of skull included) 21½lbs.; pretty good, is it not? It is to be confessed that the word *Dives* fairly beats me; but under *Roses* the picture of nil-gai is excellent; I have heard the animal called *roz*, or *rojee* in the North-west provinces; in Central India its Mahratta name is *ru-i*. By the rose on the breast is doubtless meant the black throat tuft of the male. The "*wolves like stags with hairy horns*," brought me to a halt for some time, but it is now as plain as that Ootacamund is better than my present quarters: learned Dr. Gemelli, saw the hairy pedestal of the horn, the canine teeth, and grimly ribbed face of a muntjac, perhaps heard the terrible voice of this pretty little imposter, turned out his wolf in sheep's clothing accordingly, and moreover was not the first, as he will not be the last, learned man who has been taken in by a pretty little imposter.

"Black wild cats with wings" readily change into flying squirrels; not long ago I heard one of the latter gravely spoken of as a flying cat. The Mahratta term for a panther is, *vide* page 99 of Jerdon, *beebeea*; *Cito* is evidently the hunting leopard. Heat apoplexy is, we know to our sorrow, rife in some of the spots most loved by wild boars, but the sun must have been much hotter, the mud more easily baked, the pigs stouter, or the tigers weaker, in old Gemelli's days than at present, for here, where the mighty boar abounds, we never see such a hog in armour as he describes (query, was that the origin of the term which is mentioned in No. 28 of the *Spectator*, as one of the absurd signs in London, and also in Mr. Hotten's

History of Sign-boards?) *Apropos* of this, one does not often see a boar succumb to a single spear thrust, but last week we found a magnificent fellow that, after a short run, was thus neatly accounted for by a hard riding ensign, one of the now very rare specimens of that once abundant species.

The tragical termination to the *Portugueses* sport, if they did not hold straight, must have made their *tyger*-shooting highly interesting.

Yes, HAWKEYE the righteous cause of preservation must prosper, the more so that it has enlisted such a skilful soldier as the *Pioneer*; it is comforting for us who have formed the skirmishers and advanced guard in the attack to know that we have so well disciplined and powerful a force of the "*three arms*" to support us.

VAGRANT.

BUSTARD AND ANTELOPE.

Now for the length of antelope horns. I think that in Southern India the horns of antelope seldom exceed 20 inches in length, and that the average is under 18 inches. The longest of those I have killed were little above 22, the two next 21 and 19.

At page 276 of his book, Jerdon remarks that he has seen several pairs of black buck horns, 26 inches long, and heard of those 27, and that one pair, mentioned by Mr. Elliot, were 24 inches long, with five flexures and fifty rings. I do not understand how these flexures should be counted, or rather where one is supposed to end and the next to commence, but in Bombay, I saw a pair of black buck horns, in length and number of rings, although not in number of flexures, exceeding those

mentioned by Messrs. Elliot and Jerdon. This buck was shot in Goozerat, on the western side of the gulf of Cambay; his horns, fairly measured, and when off the skull, were $26\frac{1}{2}$ inches long, with fifty two rings; but with only three and a half flexures or twists.

Except in the Madras Club, I do not know where the *Indian Sporting Review* for March, 1847, is to be found; if, however, any of your readers will take the trouble of looking at page 17 of that periodical, they will see an excellent sketch of two pairs of antelope horns, one $25\frac{1}{2}$ inches, and weighing 11lbs. and 4oz., the other $24\frac{1}{2}$ inches, and weighing 11lbs. and 11oz. The first buck was killed near Hyderabad (Dekhan), the other near Kamptee; both were shot by the writer of the letter, Lieut. Ramsbottom, of the 4th King's Own Regiment, an old shooting crone of mine, who in his description of the drawings, invited brother sportsmen to record whether they had seen longer specimens. On leaving India he asked me to tell him if I could find any authentic proof of these horns being surpassed in length; but, with the one exception mentioned above, I never did. Of these measurements there is no doubt, the horns were taken fairly, both on and off the skull. The $25\frac{1}{2}$ incher was killed during the time that HAWKEYE and I were quartered together at Secunderabad; and this head, perhaps, was that of the grand buck he speaks of. Alack! dear HAWKEYE! these memories of one's subaltern days, although they often bring to recollection many a stirring scene or pleasant face, are melancholy withal; but of the various good and hearty fellows I have hunted and shot with, there were none more lovable than the unselfish, cheery comrade and thorough sportsman, with gun or in the saddle, just mentioned: like Gelert of old, he was—

“So true, so brave, a lamb at home,—a lion in the chase.”

Many a brave and gentle heart lies near him at Sebastopol; but not one that had these qualities more strongly developed than he had.

Writing of horns reminds me of a curious story related to me the other day. About a couple of months ago a sportsman from this station knocked over a very fine sambur stag, and while running up to perform the last ceremonies of woodcraft, saw what he took to be a large hind rush out of the bushes, among which the stag had fallen. Our friend (more shame to him, for he is a good shot, and should have disdained to fire at a hind at this season) dropped this second animal on the spot, lo! it turned out to be the original stag! which must have retired into this spot for the purpose of getting rid of his last season's horns; the bullet assisted nature. for the poor brute in his fall had dropped both the antlers; a very fine pair they are

Like HAWKEYE, we have all employed numberless dodges to get up to game. My last successful one was a few days ago. We had tried a pig-sticking meet, not far from this, but a nilgai was the only beast that would break; my companions being light of heart and heels, rode back to assist at a ball that was to come off the same evening. I remained in camp, in order to shoot my way back next morning; being instigated the more towards this by having seen a brace of bustard, as we were riding out to the tents; and moreover feeling certain that Mrs. V., who is a martinetta (why should there not be a feminine to "martinet?") of the strictest notions regarding ball-room discipline, would not require my aid as a chaperon for our girls, who, poor things, one must do them the justice to say, really give me very little trouble. Rain prevented me from leaving the tents until late, and when, after a long search a bustard was viewed, the bird (a fine cock) was so wary that he very nearly persuaded me to let him slip altogether. Four times did he lure me into a weary and anxious stalk, only on each occasion, just when a few yards more were all that was required, to dash my hopes to the ground by taking a long flight, after which the process of marking down, &c.,

had to be repeated. The last and longest took him back nearly to his original ground. An observant ploughman he passed over, wonderful to say, tried to mark him down (is it not strange how blind, whether intentionally or otherwise, natives are on such occasions?) and said he had settled far off, on a level bit of black soil without a twig to hide him. A lucky thought induced me to persuade the man to drive his bullocks and plough in that direction, while I walked beside him. For some time there did not seem much chance that my masked battery would come into play, for we got to the further end of the bare ground without seeing him; beyond this were two or three small bushes: feeling sure that he must be taking shelter from the fierce noon-day sun, which had come out since the rain I made the ploughman guide his team in that direction, then, changing the Henry express rifle for a smooth-bore, with B.B., ran towards the bushes: just what was expected; up got the magnificent bird, wild, and in a vast hurry; but not far, or fast enough to prevent the trusty Joseph Lang, from dropping him, (when was there a weapon like it, dear ROE-DEER?) A good photograph did he afterwards afford, then a dish dainty enough for an alderman, and last not least, his feathers are preserved for my fishing friends.

On one occasion, while working up to him, I saw, through the glass, a very interesting sight: he was engaged in eating green beetles (as I found out when, after his flight, I got up to the spot;) three or four crows attempted to go shares in the repast, and it was great fun to see the grand bird, with every feather of his long white neck puffed out, charging at one of his impudent tormentors, while the others attacked the breakfast.

On another day, not long ago, a fine cock bustard gave me an equally good, but very annoying opportunity of watching the habits of the bird. I had followed him, after a long flight, when the grand white neck was suddenly raised, well to the left, and my friend was off before there was a chance of stopping

him. We marked him down into a fair open bit, beyond which was a low stony hill covered with grass, in which it would have been impossible to mark him. He stalked about the open spot for some time, then, tired with his exertions under the mid-day sun, sat down in the shade of a thorn, keeping up however a bright look-out, as I could clearly see by watching him through the glass. Feeling sure that if startled again he would take to the high grass, and that every moment of hot sun was in my favor, I let him rest, and gun-carrier, horse-keeper, his charge and self, took advantage of the halt to breakfast. Suddenly a large herd of cattle appeared on the scene, between us and the bustard, and fed towards him: we could not stop them, and it was a strange but most annoying sight to see the bird, not in the least alarmed at the cows, but, conscious that they kept bad company, walking quietly before them, until he reached the cover just mentioned, in which he saved himself.

I fully endorse all that SMOOTH-BORE has said about the express rifle: here, in return for what he has told us, pray accept the following extract from "*The experienc'd Fowler: Or The Gentleman, Citizen, and Country-man's pleasant and profitable recreation,*" published in 1697, by "J. S., Gent.," who, whatever may have been his merits in "*Exercise of Fowling,*" "*which if moderately used is also very much conducing to*" "*Health, by being up early, and breathing the fresh Morning*" "*Airs and the Earth's ascending Fragrancy,*" was a most hardened poacher, who held forth without a shame or reference to time or season on the "*True Art of taking Water and Land*" "*Fowl, with divers kinds of Nets, Lime Twigs, Lime Bushes,*" "*and how to make the best Bird Lime, on Bat Fowling, Low*" "*bellling, Tramelling, and driving Fowl, how to find their*" "*Haunts, and take them with Springes, Snares, &c.*" He gives the following directions:—

"*To fowl with the piece and stalking horse.*—A Barrel of
 "five foot and a half, cleaverly made taper, but by such degrees

“ as not well discernable in particular parts, till declining to
“ the muzzle or little end ; and if they be case-hardened, they
“ will endure better, carry much further, and not be so apt to
“ jarr or recoil. Six foot is a sufficient length for the Barrel of
“ of any Piece, all above are unmanageable and tiresom ; and
“ though they may carry farther the Mark is as it were beyond
“ aim ; and by reason so vast a distance of Air is to be pene-
“ trated with the Shot, it will make such an impression on,
“ and so divide them that there can be seldom a true level, un-
“ less with a single Bullet. As for the bore, it must be indif-
“ ferent, not quite big as that of a Harquebuss, and so it will
“ hold and carry the Charges to a farther level ; and in this
“ case a good and true firelock is to be preferred before all
“ others, because it is not so discernable to the Fowl as a
“ Matchlock, neither so troublesome ; and then again in Rain,
“ Snow, Fogs, or windy weather, there is no fear of extinguish-
“ ing, as a Match often is, when you are many miles from a
“ House perhaps, and then if you have not a Tinder-box at hand
“ your Sport for a time is marred ; But I need not much insist
“ on this, because Firelocks have gained the preference, and the
“ other are rarely used. Your Charge of Powder must be some
“ thing more than the proportion of your Shot in measure, but
“ not in weight, at least a third part ; but here I must leave it
“ to the length and strength of your Piece, and the distance
“ you level at, for the proportioning your Charge ; but beware
“ of over-doing it upon any account whatever : your Shot must
“ be round and proportioned to the Game you shoot at. For
“ small Birds, Seed-shot will do ; but for large, Hail-shot, or
“ larger, as you conceive the Fowl stronger or weaker ; for there
“ are divers Fowls though hit, if the Wings be not disabled, or
“ the vital Parts penetrated, will, with little difficulty, carry
“ the Shot away in their Bodies, and recover their Wounds ;
“ Therefore in Shooting take these Directions. Always as near
“ as you can, shoot with the Wind, for it carries the Shot much
“ the smarter and farther ; come not, if you can avoid it in the

“face of the Fowl to shoot, unless you are very closely covered
“but rather take her turning side-ways, so that she will be
“sure to be disabled, if not killed; in the Tail or behind is not
“so well, the Shot being apt to glance over. Water-Fowl, as
“well the web-footed as the cloven, are of all most shy; and
“therefore you must use great Policy to come near them.”

Here is a charming use of the word *policy*, which according to Bailey's Dictionary is craft, or subtilty: but which, although it often means the same, still, is now explained away in a far softer and prettier manner.

You are right, as usual, dear HAWKEYE, about the tantalizing little gazelle, chickara, goat antelope, or ravine deer, which is an especial favorite of mine, and of which the longest horns I have seen, were of a buck a little more than 13 inches, and of a doe just six. The skull to which these last belonged is intended for the Madras Museum. This doe was killed by my greyhounds; with the exception of an old scar on one leg, she appeared in excellent health and condition, and the ground was not in favor of the dogs; she should therefore not have been run into. This beautiful antelope is very easily tamed, but like other wild animals in captivity the males become savage during the rutting season. A very handsome buck, now in my possession, and intended for the People's Park at Madras,—if his exceeding impudence to dogs and men does not bring him to an untimely end,—requires to be handled with great caution, for he makes use of his dirk-like horns with or without any provocation.

A curious instance of how closely wild animals will stand when they think they are concealed was observed by me the other day. While, with a friend, wandering over the hills alluded to in my last letter, we caught sight of the head and shoulders of a *muntjac*, standing under a bush, on the far side of a deep ravine—people term them *korries* in those parts,

probably from the old English word *carre*, a deep or boggy place. The little brute stood broadside on, offering as neat a mark as any man need desire. while, to my utter shame be it owned, three shots from the express rifle plumped, all in exactly the same spot into the hill side, just over his back, until my friend, who up to this time had with the utmost calmness inspected this target practice,—came to the front with his rifle, and caused the little wretch to move on. The memory of those misses will haunt me for many a day.

In his wanderings HAWKEYE most probably has come across the common Indian hare, although, like me, he did not know until he saw Jerdon's book that there were two varieties of hares in Southern India. The "*black naped*" is the hare of the Neilgherries, Madras, &c.: all about the part of the country I am at present quartered in, the "*common hare*" is the only species I have found. As with the pin-tailed and the common snipe, the difference is very apparent *after* it has once been pointed out; but until this has been done it might easily escape observation. I think that hares breed in March, April, and May; perhaps later, according to locality and climate. My dogs killed three or four leverets during those months this year. They should every where be protected from about the 15th of March, to the 1st of September.

SMOOTH-BORE deserves the thanks of all men fond of natural history for making known to us Mr. Allan Hume's, excellent method of preserving small birds with carbolic acid. A little practice and care appear to be all that is required: so far my specimens, some of them very rare, have succeeded admirably; and if they stand this heavy monsoon they should be proof against anything. Can SMOOTH-BORE, however, tell me how the birds are to be prepared for setting up? A little steam would make them pliable; but would not this absorb or weaken the virtues of the carbolic acid? Have the Madras Museum set up any specimens so prepared?

Reading this again calls to memory a stratagem by which, taking an unfair and base advantage of gleanings in Natural History and observations of the manners and customs of animals, I encompassed the death of my last black buck. Ah, me! now more than three years ago. Office work in India is often so interesting that it repays a sportsman for absence from pursuits amongst which he has passed many happy and well remembered hours, but still to the debit side must be placed the enforced abstinence from an open air existence, which has become almost second nature, the numberless fascinations of a sportsman's or naturalist's life and the affectionate sympathy which increases day by day between trusty hench-man and master, horse, dog and owner, and (why should there not be?) between gun-stock, eye and shoulder.

While going from that delightful little hill station Chikalda to Akola and close to the latter place, I saw, just before sun-set, a large herd of Antelope under the patronage (*command* it cannot be termed, for with antelope as with those who shoot them the wily sex* appear to be the chief incentives to action and to succeed in having every thing done exactly as they please) of a very handsome black-buck. The temptation was too great to resist, therefore, although there was not much more day-light to trust to, the herd so far off that acquaintance with it could only be formed through a telescope and the open cotton plain (the month was March) of Berar against the stalker the Henry express rifle was taken in hand and "Dundee" and a spear ordered to follow. Those who know the bare and black plains of Berar at that season can well understand why cover was not to

* Blame not VAGRANT fair lady : these words are not his, but those of one Thomas Moore who seemed somehow well acquainted with his subject and who in mentioning certain difficulties of a pious Irishman flying from "Eyes of most unholy blue," writes—

" Alas ! the poor saint little knew,
One half the wily sex can do. "

be had, and that the only way to approach the game was to stroll towards them in the faint hope that they might take the Vagrant white man for a harmless black one, and the good Arab led after him for a baggage pony or bullock. The antelope were feeding quietly among some mimosa bushes, and did not appear to notice the intruder until he got within about three hundred yards; then, one by one, the does began to move off in that nervous way that makes a sportsman think his chance is fast slipping away from him. The herd luckily was a large one, so, showing myself as much as possible without appearing to care about them, I marked where they seemed likely to leave the bushes, and slouched along parallel to their course, keeping a keen watch on the buck who, disgusted at having to leave his supper, followed his light heeled guides very sulkily. I could not take *them* in by pretending to be a grass-cutter, an old woman picking up sticks, or any of the dodges every antelope shooter has so often tried in similar cases. Suddenly a brilliant idea struck me. I turned away from them, walked back towards "Dundee" and shouted some directions to the horse-keeper. The ruse had magical effect, for the leading does who had reached the edge of the bushes stopped on hearing the shouting, and on seeing only a noisy man apparently walking away from them, took it for granted that he was more honest than he looked, and that the ugly thing he carried was only a bullock goad, or a quarter staff. The head of the column having halted, the rest naturally followed their example; their chief took advantage of this to call to order some detrimental youngster who had overstepped antelopean etiquette, a "sub-buck" let us call him; there is a Hibernian term "buckeen" but that is only applied to a "*sporting gent*" a detestable animal in any country.

The wild rush of this scuffle caused the herd to retrace their steps: back they came, many of the does passing daintily within easy shot, the buck would not offer a good chance but kept on the other flank, going along at a sulky trot. "*It will be a*

long shot for the failing light, but it must be risked", a low whistle brings him to a stand-still, the Express sends forth her messenger, the beautiful quarry rolls over, and naught remains but the feeling of regret that so often follows the death of a deer. "No DUNDEE! you need not prick up your ears, no "chance of a run, or work for the spear to-night, but there is "better luck for us, we will spin cheerily along the road to one "of the most hospitable friends we know of."

So much for one stratagem: the day before perfectly different tactics were followed to get within reach of a beautiful little chickara buck whose lovely gazelle horns amply repaid the snake-like crawl under a mid-day sun which caused them to be converted into a double toasting fork, that has, it is hoped, done its duty well.

VAGRANT.

1812—1868.

A BANGALORE RACE MEETING.

MORE THAN HALF A CENTURY AGO.

Although "*Omnia mutantur*;" although the horses were dwarfs (not giants) in those days; and although many of them and many of the men were doubtless soon after used up, campaigning, in dust storms and black cotton mud, in broiling and steaming under sun and rain, against the Pindarees and Holkar; although the stout little Nedjee Arabs were not much larger than ponies; and although

"The good knights are dust, their swords are rust,
Their souls are with the Saints, we trust—"

the following account of the Bangalore September Meeting of 1812 may interest some readers.

It should be trustworthy; for it is extracted from an authentic source, *viz.*, the *Government Gazette* of Thursday, October 1st, 1812, a paper established by the Right Honorable the Governor in Council, and printed at the Male Orphan Asylum, for the purpose of combining public convenience with the advantage of that Institution, and "All Orders or other Public Notices appearing in the paper under the signature of the Secretaries or other Public Officers of the Government are ordered and directed to be conformed to, and obeyed accordingly." The large Unneeza Arab of these days was not then known, and as probably there was not, on that course, one well bred horse of more than 14-2, we cannot look for modern, or rather Australian, time from those desert born Nedjee ponies—"Pickle," who seems to have been only 13-1- $\frac{3}{4}$, may have a descendant taller than himself entered for the pony plate at the coming Bangalore meeting. But "Sulky's" three miles "won in hand" in 6-14 is, when we take Nedjee Arab size, the heavy state of a Bangalore course in September, and the uncouth jockeyship, barbarous and unscientific training of those days into consideration, a proof that he would be a formidable antagonist could he now be brought to the post with the advantages enjoyed by the horses coming out at our next meeting.

I was going to write in "good form," which is an expression not many years in vogue, as far as I thought, but "there is nothing new under the sun," and as, *vide* the account of the 2nd heat for the Whim Plate, it was in fashion then, I did not like to dig it up again. Manners and customs, as well as the height of race horses, have changed much since those days. Not long before (see *Asiatic Register*) a "Royal Tyger" had been turned out of the hill at St. Thomas' Mount. At Bangalore most of the best houses were in or near the Fort, the "High ground" was then the best find near the station for a fox, and, last not least, at race meetings of these money-grasping days, neither are "splendid *de jeunes*" nor public balls and

suppers given, nor was the word "*rupee*" in common use then. Most of the races are for English money.

We may as well take a look at the dress of those who were on the course. As in these days most of the spectators were soldiers and as uniform was much more worn than at present, almost every one, the gentlemen jocks excepted, appeared in it. The "gorget," the last remnant of ancient armour, was still worn by officers on duty; long black gaiters and white breeches were worn by all ranks in the infantry, the officers wore a high black hat, a chimney-pot, or "stove-pipe," as our American cousins call it, in fact, with a high regimental feather or company badge, red in most cases for grenadiers, green for "light bobs." The men wore a wonderfully heavy and bright black hat, with a brass plate in front, much higher than itself, and making a deadly attractive target for sun or bullets. As for the dress of the ladies it becomes not man to write, we must copy the description of the fashionable costume of those days, as given by a female writer:—

"Ladies wore cloth pelisses, formed like a man's coat, a round black beaver hat, silk cravat, and boots with high military heels, a sprigged lace veil, the trowsers, which peeped below the short petticoat, alone showing the weaker sex. The costume beneath the coat consisted of a cambric dress, sitting close to the form, sometimes even without any plait in the skirt, and gored in such a manner as to disclose the shape of the limbs. The robe was sometimes even damped to make it sit closer. The lighter the clothing, the more fashionable. The bust was at this period frequently enrolled in a white satin spencer. The white chemisette body was our first launch into French fashion, for until then we had never seen TULLE, we were ignorant of SATIN ROULEAUX, a transparent standing up French TOQUE, was a thing unheard of; neither had we seen short waists, or the dresses open behind and in front to the very waist. The hair was now dressed A LA CHINOISE, the broad plait surmounting the head forming a sort of basket, which held a profusion of roses. The forehead was quite uncovered, the hair being strained up from it, and at the side fell the long distinct ringlet, emulated in length by the gold earring that hung pendant beside it."

The horses are hard and full of muscle; in fact, the training of those days made it impossible for any animal with a delicate constitution to come to the post.* They are ridden in snaffle bridles, much as at present, but with saddles and saddle gear of strange and various shapes; their manes are most elaborately plaited; *but what is this!* Yes, it is a fact, almost every horse

*Vide Gervase Markham's "*Maister Peece*."

on the course has a short tail, some hardly a stump. Sporting men thought it no shame then to deprive a Nedjee Arab of his greatest glory, the beautiful loftily set on tail: the flag, the distinctive banner of his race. All honor be to the "Father of the Turf," as he is here called, "Arab Mac," the name he is better remembered by, for it is said that he would never allow an Arab to be docked. He appears to have been one of the most zealous supporters of the turf of Southern India for at least a score of years after the meeting here recorded.

You will observe that, soldiers excepted, there are hardly any Europeans on the course, and that there is not one "Loafer." Loafers were unknown then. Government did not stand on much ceremony with the "*Vagrants*" of those days, *vide* the following extract from a Government Order in this very Gazette, signed by order of the Right Honorable the Governor in Council by the then Secretary to Government:—

"The Right Honorable the Governor in Council is hereby pleased to give notice that any European, of whatever rank, description, or country, who shall be discovered passing through the territories under this Presidency, beyond fifteen miles from Fort St. George, without being furnished with a regular passport, will be taken up and confined until the pleasure of Government shall be known.

"For the more strict execution of this order, notice is hereby further given that a reward of ten pagodas will be paid to any person who shall take up and bring into the nearest garrison any European deserter, or vagrant, of any description."

Some other notices in the same Gazette are worthy of preservation. For instance, there is a—

"Commercial Notice, by order of the President of the Board of Trade, that Officers of His Majesty's and the Honorable Company's Service will be supplied with Madeira Wine from the Public Stores on Indents countersigned by Commanding Officers by instalments of monthly stoppages through the Office of the Accountant-General.

Rate—Star Pagodas 132 per Pipe."

"Packets are open for the receipt of single and double postage Letters, to be transmitted to England by the Fleet that will be despatched in the month of October."

In the same paper is a long account of the "Ceremony" of laying the Foundation Stone of the Church which is to be erected on Choultry Plain, and which is to be called St. George's

Church." This should interest those who attend the Cathedral. Last, not least, there is a hurried copy, translated from a Messina paper, of the Official Account of the Fall of Badajoz on the 6th of April.

BANGALORE SEPTEMBER MEETING.—1812.

FIRST DAY, 9TH.

1ST MAIDEN, £50 each, for horses that never won. Heats 3 miles. 8-7 each.

Colonel McDowell's Squirrel...	...	...	3. Drawn.
Mr. Vernon's Dash	...	...	2. do.
Colonel O'Kelly's Teddy the Grinder	...	...	1. Walked over.
Captain Clark's So So	...	...	Drawn.

Time—7-11.

The Grinder carried his Maiden with the utmost ease.

THE COUNTRY PLATE.—Heats $1\frac{1}{2}$ mile. £130, 9st. each, 3lbs. to mares, P.

Lieutenant Newman's Blue Skin	...	...	2-2
Lieutenant Barnard's Balderdash	...	...	1-1
Colonel O'Kelly's Sheelah	...	...	Bolted.
Mr. M'Donald's Mont Videau	...	...	3. Broke down.

1st Heat 3-28.—2nd do. 3-41.

The first Heat—Pretty running between Mont Videau and Balderdash, until the former broke down. Blue Skin did not support his well-earned reputation, and Balderdash won in good style. The 2nd Heat—Blue Skin having changed his jockey, showed himself still possessed of a portion of his old pluck; he ran neck and neck all the way with Balderdash until the distance post, when the little horse just headed him, and won with great difficulty. This was a very interesting and well-contested race, and the winning horse proved his nature to differ widely from his name.

SECOND DAY.

THE WHIM PLATE.—Heats 3 miles, age and inches. £100.

Mr. Vernon's Dustman, wt. 8-7, ht. 13-3, heats 1-1.
Colonel O'Kelly's Shamrock, wt. 8-5, aged 4-6, ht. 13-3, heats 3-2.
Captain Weatherall's Weazle, wt. 8-12, aged 5, ht. 14- $1\frac{1}{2}$, heats 2-3.
Colonel McDowell's Pickle, wt. 7-13, ht. 13- $1\frac{1}{2}$, heats 4 dis.

1st Heat 6-34—2nd do. 6-40.

Dustman lay by the first heat at least one-fourth of a distance? Weazle and Pickle made play the first round, Shamrock running about two lengths in the rear. Pickle, however, could not keep his place in the second round, and Weazle and Shamrock maintained their ground until they came to the mile

post, when Dustman showed that he had been making game of them all the time that they had been endeavouring to make the play with him; he ran up with astonishing facility. Shamrock pulled up when his rider found that he could not win the heat; but Weazle was not to be so easily vanquished: he supported his rate, and the event was doubtful until within a few yards of the ending post, when the Whip proved Dustman's bottom, and he won by a neck. Had Weazle's rider done his horse justice, the heat would have probably been his. A better race never was witnessed.

The 2nd Heat—Dustman lay by a little. Weazle and Pickle made play at first. Shamrock waited on them; Dustman made his push at the same place, and headed all his antagonists. Pickle shook his tail and lost ground every stroke. Weazle fell in the rear also considerably. Shamrock ran an honest horse, he could not touch Dustman; but he ran in excellent form, and showed himself a horse of blood. Pickle was distanced, and Weazle well beaten.

THE YORK AND LANCASHIRE PLATE of 370 Pagodas, given by the Officers of
His Majesty's 84th Foot, Weight for age.

Colonel McDowell's Precipitate	...	...	Wt. 8-3, Age 5.
			Heats 1-1.
Colonel O'Kelly's Lady Florence	...	...	do. do.
			Heats 2-3.
Mr. Clark's So So	...	...	do. do.
			Heats 4-2.
Lieutenant Jeffree's Wellington	...	...	Wt. 8-6, Age 6,
			Heats 5, bolted.
Captain Slade's Arthur	...	...	Wt. 7-12, Age 4,
			Heats 3-4.

1st Heat, 3-16. 2nd Do. 3-18.

Precipitate won both heats easily. The Mare showed speed, and Mr. Clark's horse ran game the second heat, although he was but So So at first.

THIRD DAY, 14TH SEPTEMBER.

THE RAJAH'S PLATE, 500 Pagodas, for all Horses. Heats 3 miles. 1-7 each.

Colonel McDowell's Allfours	...	...	...	1-1
Colonel O'Kelly's Larry O'Toole	...	...	...	2-2
Mr. Vernon's Palafox	...	...	...	3-3

1st Heat 6-37. 2nd do. 6-44.

Allfours evinced great superiority in both heats. In the second heat the three horses merely cantered until they came to the last half-mile post, when a very pretty spurt of speed took place, favorable, however, to Colonel McDowell's horse. O'Toole ran game for so small a horse.

SAME DAY.

THE PONY PLATE.

Colonel McDowell's mare Witchcraft beat with ease Mr. Newman's Bunguish, Mr. Miller's Pickaxe, and Captain Holes' Copperbottom.

The Heat, $\frac{1}{2}$ mile and the distance, was ran 3m. 4s.

FOURTH DAY, 16TH.

THE LADIES' PLATE.—For all Horses carrying 8-7 each. Heats 2 miles. £100

Mr. Vernon's Gentleman	...	...	...	1-1
Colonel O'Kelly's Garry Owen	...	...	...	2 Drawn.
Lieutenant Newman's Boy	...	...	...	4-2
Colonel McDowell's Folly	...	...	...	3 Drawn.

1st Heat 4-9.—2nd do. 4-13.

Gentleman won with considerable ease. Garry Owen ran in good form.

GALLOWAY PLATE.

Colonel McDowell's Little Pickle	...	...	...	1-1
Mr. Vernon's Dash	...	...	...	2-3
Mr. Brown's Dragon	...	...	...	3-2

1st Heat 3-14.—2nd do. 3-24.

Pickle won in hand.

SAME DAY.

Colonel O'Kelly's mare Lady Florence beat with ease Mr. Clark's horse So S $1\frac{1}{2}$ mile and a distance, carrying 8-3 each, for 100 pagodas. The mile and a ha ran in 3-10.

FIFTH DAY, 18TH SEPTEMBER.

THE BANGALORE TURF BOWL—value £150, for all horses carrying 8-4. On
Three Mile Heat.

Colonel O'Kelly's Sulky	1	} 6.14
Mr. Vernon's Gentleman	...	...	...	2
Colonel McDowell's Plebeian	...	...	...	3

This was the finest race ever seen on this course in point of time. Sulky took the lead at starting. Plebeian endeavoured to rate with him, but it would not do. Gentleman laid by, until the end of the first mile, when he passed Plebeian, and lay within two lengths of Sulky. Sulky gradually, while going at his rate, gained ground on his opponent, while Plebeian lost way in the same proportion. Sulky won in hand, running the course in 6-14, Gentleman about

five or six lengths in rear, and Plebeian more than double that distance. Gentleman showed himself a very superior horse; he ran in high style, and did not belie his name and reputation.

THE BEATEN PLATE, 25 each, Two Mile Heats.

Colonel O'Kelly's Larry O'Toole	...	...	1-1
Mr. Vernon's Palafox...	...	...	2-2
Mr. Newman's Boy	...	...	3 Drawn.

Larry won in Irish style, well held, and easily.

1st Heat 4-16—2nd Heat 4-23.

Colonel McDowell's Lewis Gordon beat Mr. Prager's Vermint, 8-7 each. One mile heat. 100 pagodas.

SIXTH DAY, MONDAY, 21st.

Colonel O'Kelly's Shamrock carried 8-5, beat Colonel McDowell's Little Pickle, 8-1, one two mile heat, for £100. Won with ease in 4-16.

Mr. Clark's So So beat Colonel O'Kelly's Grinder two 1½ mile heats for 100 pagodas.

1st Heat 3-15—2nd Heat 3-16.

Mr. Prager's Tinker beat Mr. Peter's Busy, Owners on, once round, Busy proved but an idle racer, for 100 pagodas.

SEVENTH AND LAST DAY, WEDNESDAY, 23RD.

THE SULKY CUP, presented to the Bangalore Turf by Colonel O'Kelly, value £100. For all Arab and country-bred horses, carrying 8st. 7lbs. each. One two mile heat. Every horse that wins this Cup to carry 2lbs. extra in running for it at all following meetings, and the winner of the Bowl to carry 3lbs. extra should he start for the Cup at the same meetings at which he shall have won the Bowl; every person challenging the Cup to stake £60. There must be three challengers, or no race. The Cup to be forthcoming at every meeting, or the last winner to forfeit £200. 3lbs. to mares and geldings. Horses to be bona fide property.

Colonel O'Kelly's horse Sulky walked over the course for this Cup.

Lieutenant Jefferies' grey horse Barton beat Tommy Hole's Copper Bottom for half-a-mile catch weight.

Mr. Jefferies' horse ran through his girths. His rider, however, kept his seat, and won his match in style.

Colonel McDowell's horse Lewis Gordon, carrying 12-12, beat Lieut. Prager's Tinker, carrying 11-4. One two mile heat, owners on, for 250 pagodas.

This was the most interesting match ever witnessed in the Peninsula; the popular wish of the course sided with the Father of the Turf; but, from his giving so much weight, little hope was entertained of his success. His blood

and well-known skill, however, inspired confidence, and with the knowing ones he was still the favorite. Lieutenant Prager took the lead, and went off at a sloping pace, his opponent laying by ready to seize with Newmarket skill upon any opportunity. At the lower turn of the course Lewis Gordon made a push at Tinker, evidently in the hope of making him bolt. Lieut. Prager's good jockeyship prevented this mishap. For some time the event was doubtful. It was evident that Tinker had the speed, Lieut. Prager generally keeping the lead by about a nose. Gordon's Bottom, however, might be relied upon, and when he opportunely made his push at the turn in, the public hope was not disappointed. He passed Tinker, and the Father of the Turf, by winning this race in real jockey style, evinced that his sporting spirit and turf powers kept even pace with his great experience. The spectators were so delighted at Colonel McDowell's success, that he was taken off his horse, and cheered, and chaired to the scales.

(Signed)

JOSEPH PRAGER,

CLERK OF THE COURSE.

During this meeting several splendid DEJEUNES here given, as also two Public Race Balls and Suppers, which were attended by all the beauty and fashion in the Mysore Division, and it is but justice due to the ladies who honoured us with their company, to say they vied with each other in their endeavours to please. Lieutenant Colonel M'Dowell's health as the Father of the Turf, being given by the Honourable A. H. Cole, and which was drank with three times three, he returned thanks and drank SULKY's safe and speedy arrival in Ireland. Nothing could have ended more satisfactorily than this delightful meeting, and which for real good sport and good humour can never be surpassed and very seldom equalled.

The Races for the Next Year are fixed to commence on the first Monday of the second week in September.

The Arab Sulky or Cole Arabian.

In the Bengal Sporting Magazine for 1833, there is a record giving an extract from the account of the meeting just mentioned accompanied by a portrait of this once famous Arab.

Immediately after the meeting his owner, the Honorable Arthur Cole (who in addition to his other well known merits was perhaps the best sportsman of his day in India, a land ever fruitful in hardly proved hunters) sent Sulky to Ireland where as well as in England, he appears to have been known as the Cole Arabian. If his progeny reproduced any of the good qualities of their fore-father they *must* have been good.

From his portrait Sulky seems to have been a thick, low horse with the typical great forehead, deep girth, small head

and large eye of the pure Nedjee Arab, but with hind quarters spoiled by the savage docking of those days into those of a clever hackney. He was a galloway, but his exact height is not given, he is said to have obtained his evil cognomen from a sulky and vicious disposition, but although he may have been a bad tempered horse in the stable, his public running proves him ever to have been an honest and willing one on a race course, he is described as "a golden chestnut, with a "blaze down his face and white legs," the "*parach-rung*" five colors, four white feet and white face, ever a favorite color among Eastern Tribes.

It is pleasant going into these tales of olden days, for as every reader of grand old Orme's vivid history of our early Indian wars fights with the few sturdy Britons who took India and suffers with them against heat, treachery, sickness and monsoons, so do the nerves of an old sportsman's heart beat stronger at the mention of so famous a teacher of his craft as was the Honorable Arthur Cole.

VAGRANT.

THE HORSES USED IN INDIA

TO THE EDITOR OF THE MADRAS TIMES.

SIR,—In an article that appeared in your paper of the 24th April last, on "the Horses used in India" you have, I think, not quite correctly described "the drawbacks" to each breed. Permit an old horseman to comment on your remarks on each, viz. "Arab,,," "Australian," "Persian," and "Heratee," and although he may differ from you, do not consider that he writes from any wish to argue, but from a love of the horse as a comrade and

old acquaintance and as the best servant of the traveller, the sportsman and the soldier; so deal lightly with the writer's shortcomings in composition if his facts are sound, for his experience as a penman is sadly limited, although like many another old soldier he may with Warwick say,

“Between two hawks, which flies the higher pitch;
“Between two dogs, which hath the deeper mouth;
“Between two blades, which bears the better temper;
“Between two horses, which doth bear him best;
“Between two girls, which hath the merrier eye;
“I have, perhaps, some shallow spirit of judgment;
“But in these nice quillets of the law,
“Good faith, I am no wiser than a daw.”

You say, “An Arab, it is true, is perhaps the most delightful of all horses to ride across such country as one generally gets in India. Very little fencing, but any amount you please of stones and nullahs of all sizes; but he cannot be equally recommended as a roadster, from his habit of stumbling at a walk, the pace of all others most useful on a long journey. The present price, too, of Arabs is such as to render them almost unattainable to any except the wealthiest of us.”

Granted, that the present price of Arabs places them beyond the reach of most of us, but surely, that is their only drawback? I fancy that in saying an Arab is a delightful horse to ride where there is “very little fencing,” you mean, he is not, or cannot be made into a fencer. Now, with all deference to you, I think that the only reason why an Arab is not as good a jumper, of his inches, as is to be found in the world, is, that, while he is young and teachable he is generally very valuable and therefore belongs, if to a rich man, to some grave senior who has lost either power or inclination to “lark” him, or if he belongs to a poor one he is generally a charger, and kept for parade work and other gentle riding. Let the old nag get “screwed.” or reduced from a charger, or racer, into the much suffering hunter of a hard riding Sub, and then, see if, notwithstanding want of early education and the stiffness of age,

he will not jump. Again who ever knew a well bred Arab that, with his "blood up," in a run could not, or would not jump? If an Arab stops then, take an old horseman's word for it—the check is not in the horse's heart, but in the rider's. Surely there is every thing, except size, about an Arab to make a first class hunter, or hack; a charger need only be a good-looking hunter larger and better educated than usual. The blood, courage and temper of an Arab are better; his wiry and tightly strung muscles and sinews, and compact and small ivory like bone, give him more lasting qualities, and his form is more perfect and level than any other horse we know of. What more, then, in the way of materials do you want to make a "fencer," of? I use the expression "compact and ivory like bone" advisedly. Any one who objects to the phrase need only go to Mr. Pritchard's Infirmary and compare the cannon bone of an Arab -with that of an Australian, or any other horse. I feel sure that Mr. Pritchard, would gladly bear me out in this.

Strangely enough you say, just before you condemn the Arab for stumbling, that he is the most delightful of all horses over any amount you please of stones and nullahs of all sizes. Have you ever proved his merits over still worse ground, what is generally called by hog hunters "Cotton" i. e. the black cotton soil, split by the sun into a lace work of fissures and cracks of every size and depth, from a few inches either way, to as many feet, and as close as they can well be? Still worse, than the cracks, are the holes in this sort of ground; for the horse cannot see these last until he is nearly over them, I do not think I can give you an example of "cotton" ground about Madras, nor do I think that such ground is, from what I remember of it, bad south of Secunderabad or the Deccan, and that it is not truly horrible until you have to cross the parched plains of the Central Provinces between February and May. Be that as it may, however any horse that slips neatly over bad cotton ground and can catch up a pig on it cannot be naturally a stumbler.

Now as you write the Arab down as a stumbler, have you any objection to answer three questions?

1st.—Do you say this from personal knowledge or from hearsay?

2nd.—As a general rule do you ride with spurs?

3rd.—Do you know anything about a horse's foot; or having a horse shod? and if so, do you take advantage of your knowledge? I know of course that you have books on the horse and with them before you, you could point out the bars or the frog, or what not, in a picture.

The old established idea, handed down from our first days in India, that Arabs are slow and unsafe walkers, has, in confounding cause and effect most unfairly maligned the breed.

The Arab's "docile laziness," as the Griffin's A. D. C. calls it, and his generally being on very familiar terms with his rider are apt to make the horse indolent, especially when that rider is, as we are all too apt to be after a hot night or a hard day in office, languid or dispirited; the inattentive rider makes the horse heedless, both are soon half asleep and, if in sauntering along a trip is the consequence, the horse is blamed for what is the rider's fault. Added to this, horses are ever now most vilely shod, then what must they have been long ago in our up-country stations? Let a man always ride with spurs, he need not use them, but the very knowledge that they are near his girths will make a horse collect himself, let the horse's feet be done justice to by having his shoes changed once in twenty five days, twenty-one is a better division, and then, if the Arab trips or is a bad walker you will find there is some cause utterly unconnected with the "Desert blood," that will account for the failing; probably a badly formed shoulder or an incipient splint. It is odd that the first defect should even be overlooked, but so it is; scores of animals fit only for harness are kept out of it merely because their owner cannot see what makes his horse not quite satisfactory. A lady from her correct

eye as to form, will often, long before a man does, discover that there is something wrong here ; although she cannot tell what it is. A splint while forming will often not only cause a horse to stumble, but even to fall as if he had been shot, right on his head, not on his knees.

After many a year spent amongst Arabs, the present writer can only call to remembrance one well made horse of that race, that could not be made a good and safe walker of, and he cannot help thinking that this was caused by some disease of the brain. The horse when roused was a magnificent one in action, form, courage and temper, but until then, in the stable or out of it, he always seemed asleep. He belonged to one of the best heavy weights in India, who, finding that he was an unsafe walker, and who, not having time to school the nag and knowing that the writer liked the work, very kindly allowed him to try to improve the horse. Spurs, contrary to the writer's general rule, were put into him pretty sharply when he was first mounted ; this wakened him and for eight or ten months while thus ridden, whether as a charger, hunter or hack, he never made a mistake. When he went back to his old stable, however, and to quiet rides without spurs he was as bad as ever. In this case the sleepiness, which it required a sharp effort to get rid of, must surely have been caused by some disease of brain or stomach, not by Arab blood. Cheaper hacks than Arabs are generally on less familiar terms with their riders and for their own sakes keep awake, and thus get credit for a virtue which in the Arab has, because the rider is too lazy to develop it, been allowed to lie dormant.

The men best qualified to judge of the merits of the horses used in India, are up-country sportsmen, and men who have marched much with troops. Will any of these point out any "draw-back" save the awful one of price to Arab blood ? These men as a general rule ride with spurs, and most of them, for their own sakes, try to look after their horses feet.

Now for your remarks on Australians; the chief objection to them is pointed out by you, viz. that "the large purchases of this breed that have of late been made by the Remount Agent have almost destroyed the Import Trade in Persian and Heratee horses." In other respects you are surely too hard on them; you call them, "about the most useless brutes that ever encumbered an Indian stable, though in their own country excellent," and say they are ill-bred, vicious, ugly, soft-hearted and sickly brutes that will go off, without a kick for life, with no more provocation than a little exposure to an Indian sun." Now let us take each of these drawbacks in succession—It is I think granted by all, that the Australian is, as you say, in his own country excellent, and even allowing for all exaggeration, that under dreadful trials of heat and want of water the feats of endurance of the breed are told on better authority than mere traveller's tales. Surely the horses that work thus cannot be "ill-bred," "soft-hearted" and "sickly?" Blood is of course comparative, and one cannot expect to pick up a highly bred horse for a low figure such as many of the Walers are put up at. Besides it is a man's own fault if he buys an ill-bred horse. Surely it is not fair to write the Australian down as a vicious horse. Take any fresh lot of them you like, half wild, from want of knowledge of men and manners, and from having been bullied on ship board; most of these, shy and half broken as they are, and perfectly able to "*buck*" off the best horsemen in India, should he try them rashly or without a "*kid*," are gentle in the stable and quiet in harness within a few weeks. Such horses surely are not vicious naturally, as are many of the low bred Indian animals some of which are almost unapproachable when at their pickets or in a stable. Australians often "*buck*" so that no men can sit them, because they have been allowed to run almost wild in the bush until they are taken up for sale, most of them are young and powerful horses, nearly unbroken or, which is worse, badly broken. Yet we expect them to behave as discreetly as would a fresh batch of Arabs, a breed poetically

and proverbially gentle. Again are they more ugly than English horses? Most of them have light forehands, good shoulders and quarters, and clean sound legs and feet; a horse with these merits should not be thought very ill-looking. The greatest fault, after "*bucking*," that Walers have as riding horses, is that many of them do not at first, canter in a collected form and pull well together. That is merely from being badly broken; educate the animal as an English horse is broken in, or if the owner has not time, nerve, temper, or patience to do so himself, send the nag to school, and if he is well made, and it is a man's fault if he owns an ill made one, this failing is removed.

Now for being "*soft hearted*." It is much more easy to attack than to defend, and there are two instances told on authority that it is not easy to dispute; but to an old soldier's mind there must have been some mistake in both of those quoted as having occurred on service. It would be well were one of the officers of that Madras Battery said to have stuck fast while coming under fire in an attack on the enemy to tell us what did actually take place; very few of the Madras Batteries met Bombay ones, so that it must be easy to explain what is alluded to. As the tale is told in the *Madras Times*, there are some matters that require explanation. Have we ever had a Battery of Madras Artillery horsed exclusively, or nearly so by Walers? It is odd, too, that all the horses should have struck work at the same moment; depend upon it that supposing the Madras Battery did not advance, the delay was not caused solely by "soft-hearted" Australians. Nothing in the shape of bad ground, that is possible for wheels, has ever yet stopped Madras Artillery, and if this Battery did stick and another of a junior army, (by the way what has the age of an army to do with Australian bottom?) cross the nullah, there surely must have been some impassable ground, a quick sand or a precipitous bank, for instance, which one Battery had the ill-luck to fall upon and the other the good fortune to escape

and which thus caused the latter to "take their guns across at a gallop, and assume their lead in an advance on the enemy."

As the other case, viz., "of a troop of stud bred horses passing a troop of Australians, who were finally got through by looking on to their guns a number of cavalry horses," is told on good authority, it would be well perhaps to give further particulars in justice to stud bred horses which have been supposed by many judges, including no less an authority than the late Sir Walter Gilbert, to be wanting in bottom, or to use his own words, as quoted in the Calcutta Sporting Review by Lieutenant Colonel J. Bowers, once so well known on the Madras side as a judge of what a horse should be like, and the original purchaser amongst many other good ones of "Minuet," "The Child of the Islands," "Sir Benjamin," and "Battledore": "even the best of them, are too often bad tempered, and of insufficient substance; and when they meet with any obstacle they cannot immediately surmount, they become sulky and will not renew the effort." Sir Walter Gilbert's judgment in this case refers probably to the stud bred horses as gun horses not for general use; many of them, the mares especially, have proved themselves good under saddle and trustworthy pig stickers, also for light harness work, as may be seen in going over Cook's or Hunter's stables in Calcutta.

But to return to Walers. Any one, who knows how those magnificent troops of Madras Horse Artillery the A., now the A Battery D Brigade R. H. A. and the native troop, not one whit behind their British brethren as horsemen, worked under the sun of Bundelcund and Central India, through heat, which cost the life of many a gallant soldier, and which no one who has only served in the Carnatic can realize, will bear witness that to go through what these two troops did, required good and lasting horses, and any one who saw that glorious A troop drive up the Doodrie ghaut, between Kirwie and Rewah, will bear witness that not of one of those horses could have been "seft-hearted," or wanting in pluck in a struggle. The writer

who is not an Artillery man, may be mistaken, but from what he remembers of these horses, he imagines that fully one-third of them were Walers; at any rate he is certain that the commandant of the A troop, who might of course have had other horses, rode as his pet charger to the end of the campaign a grey Waler, and that when this officer went home, on the Force returning to quarters, the horse was selected by the successor in command, who liked the animal so much that he afterwards took him from Kamptee to Burmah and then back to India. This Waler therefore certainly has worked many thousand miles under an Indian sun, and under the greatest trials of climate and heat an animal could well be forced to undergo. He worked for ten years after the Mutiny.

Although individual cases may not prove the merits of a breed, and although the writer has not had many Walers in his stable, those few could furnish some evidence that the race is not quite so bad as the article in the *Tines* would make out. In the first instance; the time, viz., the most burning hours under a Deccan sun of the 31st May and the ground covered; the first four stages on the Secunderabad and Madras Road, Umbaree-pett, Mulkapoor, Goonderampully and Narkailpully speak for themselves. The writer has not a book to refer to for the exact distance, which to the far end of the Secunderabad cantonment must be nearer 50 than 40 miles, but as the bit of road is known to half the Madras Army, any one can find out who cares to do so. The writer's leave from a shooting trip expired one 31st of May, and he had arranged to ride in from Narkailpully on that day and had written to his brother subs to post their hacks for three stages. The letter, however, sent in by a cooly did not arrive in time. In the morning the writer left the Narkailpully bungalow to look after bears in a hill about eight miles off, intending to return to breakfast and canter in the 40 odd miles afterwards. He came back in due course after his morning's work, and a 16 miles ride on a Deccan

tat, and after breakfast, say between 10 and 11, mounted his other horse, a well bred little Australian, of 14-3, to ride to Gooradumpelly. It is hardly necessary to remark, that the sun was hot and so was the wind, but the horse was hearty and the man young and in great spirits, as the morning's sport had been good; one of the few bears the writer has seen (out of very many accounted for,) that would go out of his way to charge, had been bagged just at the gun's muzzle, so the willing little horse was sent cheerfully along at a gallop for that stage; say 12 miles. On reaching Gooradumpelly, his syce who had been sent on was found but no relief in the horse flesh way and the nag was at once rubbed down and fed and then ridden on to Mulkapoor, still at a good pace as the rider expected to meet a change every yard, no relief there; so he had to be taken on to Umbaree-pett, thence to Secunderabad. which was reached just at sunset and in lots of time for mess, the little horse as fresh and hungry as if he had only gone over one instead of four stages. He was not one bit the worse for his day in the sun and worked for many a day afterwards as the shooting hack with a little pig sticking and lots of coursing in addition, of one of the best sportsmen in the regiment, now many a year dead. Here certainly were sun and heat enough to try any man and horse.*

No. 2—Went into the same stable, and as a sportsman's horse in the Deccan must work in the sun, he too had lots of exposure to it.

*The above was written from memory and, to err on the safe side, the supposed distance under estimated. Scott's Road book (an official authority) makes it, 53 miles 3 furlongs, as under—

Narkailpully to Goonderampully	14—3
Goonderampully to Mulkapoor	13—3
Mulkapoor to Umbaree-pett	11—2½
Umbaree-pett to Secunderabad	14—2½

add to this nearly a mile of cantonment, remember a rough road, mid-day (and MID-SUMMER) Deccan sun with a fiery hot wind all the way and the most violent foes to Australian blood must allow that the proof of endurance was a severe one—

No. 3—Was one of the cleverest chargers and hunters over very bad ground the writer ever crossed ; he too did a lot of sun work without appearing to suffer from it, but in justice to the *Times* article it must be owned that he died of fever—the cause may have been the sun.

No. 4—Was a very well bred and powerful horse, used for every thing that a saddle horse could be asked to do ; parade, hog-hunting, hack and road work for six years, two of them in the writer's stable, the rest with the Regiment, he was never off duty, and the writer has never had Arab which did more justice to good grooming or had a brighter coat.

No. 5—Certainly was an ugly animal, as ladies' judgment goes, with a short tail, drooping quarters, and a mouse colored hide covered with brands and galls from being knocked about, he had an eye like a deer, however, and legs and constitution of steel, was one of the best tempered and willing brutes the writer has ever seen, and sure footed to a marvel. His ugliness sent him out of the stable of the writer who was then young and fanciful, but into the stable of a hard riding and shooting Welsh sub who having ridden him for some time passed him on to a fellow countrymen still more fond of shooting, and here the horse covered himself with much fame. Now a Welshman fond of shikar is about the hardest taskmaster to his cattle a horse can have.

No. 6.—As a five year was sold was for a thousand rupees by the writer, who five years afterwards when the horse had gone through eighteen months exposure to the heat and rain of Central India campaigning, offered the same money for him and was refused, the owner saying he had declined 1,600 Rupees for him, and that he had never been so well carried. He too therefore could stand an Indian sun.

This letter is however much longer than was at first intended, so it must be at once concluded. If you care for another, you may perhaps hear what is thought of Heratees, Persians and Capes, the last always excellent horses.

Your very obedient servant,

VAGRANT.

BURMA PONIES.

“The Burman horses are small but spirited and strong. There was one in 1842 in the menagerie belonging to the Zoological Society of London. It did not stand more than twelve hands high, but he was a beautiful little fellow and a picture of strength.”—*Youatt on the Horse*.

“The horses of Burmah and the Shan country which are imported into the Provinces, are small ponies resembling the little Spanish horses that run wild in Missouri, and the other western parts of America.”—*Mason's Burmah*.

The admirable ponies above described by Youatt and Mason were until the first Burmese war, almost unknown in India, but of late years they have won for themselves such high credit as safe and powerful hacks for mountain work, and so hardy withal that they are almost indispensable to all sojourners on the Neilgherries or in the Malabar Provinces, and for the general uses that ponies can be put to, they are even greater favorites than the Mahratta galloways and tattoos once so common.

The sudden introduction of “Arab” and Indian blood into Burma since the second war has however caused the “Burma,” or to use a more correct term, the “Shan” pony to differ now very widely from the animal described by Youatt and Mason.

Although perhaps the animal is now hardly so handsome or sturdy as formerly, the change is in most material points for the better, and it is difficult to conceive a more perfect hack for the purposes so small a creature can be turned to than the “Shan” pony of the present day.

The Shan pony has doubtless sprung from the same origin as the mountain ponies of Upper India or the Tartar States, viz., the wild horse of Northern Asia. Blyth, the famed naturalist pointed out to the present writer that many of them

still bear the Zebra-like, or, as he termed it, Hippotigrin stripes. The breed has evidently been carefully looked to by the Shans, who resemble in industry and intelligence their cousins the Chinese, more than do any other of the Mongolian races, and who have hitherto been so jealously afraid of losing it that no stallion, or mare unless she was supposed to be barren, was to be found in a lot brought down for sale in the British provinces.

The "Shan" (or, as he used to be called the "Pegu") pony of a few years ago was seldom above 12-2, but of immense power in loins and shoulders, the latter, and the neck, perhaps a little too heavy and the pasterns too short to please every eye, but as the animal, was hardly ever required to go out of an amble under a heavy weight, these could not be considered such draw-backs as they would have been in hacks for lighter work, and although his neck was sometimes thick, his head was generally beautifully set-on, his muzzle and eye showed almost as much breeding as do those points in an "Arab", and his feet were naturally so perfect, that they could stand almost all the ill-usage that even an Indian "Nalbund" could inflict upon them. His pace was almost always an amble, out of which it was difficult to make him break.

Men formerly had quaint ideas regarding these ponies which were generally supposed to be proof against any unfair treatment, hardly ever getting sick, but when they did, to be incurable, and they were also believed to be invariably hard pullers and to require bits of curious forms to keep them within bounds.

In the narrative of the mission to the Court of Ava in 1855, by Captain Henry Yule, Bengal Engineers, this belief is thus referred to.

"* * * * As we had no opportunity of seeing a Burman "review, I borrow the description of one from Col. Burney's "Journal (January 2nd 1831.)"

* * * The business of the day commenced by a party consisting of some of the Woongyis and Atwenwoons and first Officers of Government, dressed in their military helmets and uniform appearing at one end of the open space, mounted on small Burman ponies. They ambled one after another past the king towards a target elevated on a pole about twenty-five feet high, at which they threw a small light lance, five feet long, as they turned their horses round to return to the spot whence they started and to take another lance from one of their attendants, and amble again towards the target as before."

"They each threw about a dozen lances, and the target was not struck more than ten or eleven times.....When their stock of lances was exhausted, they dismounted, and the most successful of them came and kneeled down before the king, whilst the queen sent to them a piece of red muslin and some flowers. * * * * The next display consisted of the Cavalry marching past the king, and afterwards trying, two at a time to pick up an orange with their lances whilst in full gallop. Only two oranges were so picked up, one by a mahomedan who commanded a portion of His Majesty's Cavalry, and who is said formerly to have served in Skinner's horse."

"The Cavalry consisted of three bodies, of about eighty or ninety men each. One party had curious high head-dresses, said to be the old uniform of the Cassay horse. Most of them appeared to be Muninpoorians or their descendants. They were armed only with lances, having neither sword nor carbines, nor pistols. I should have taken them to be very bad riders, but the manner in which they struck down upon the oranges whilst in full gallop, and recovered their lances, proved them to be good horsemen. The Burmese always ride without shoes, and can insert only two or three of their toes in their stirrup iron; the large gilt flaps of the saddle prevent the use of spurs, but the noise of these flaps, with

“ which they urge their horses, can never, of course, prove so
“ effective as a good pair of spurs. In riding, they bend their
“ bodies far back, and seem to hold on by the bridle, which
“ must be the cause of all Burman ponies having such hard
“ mouths. The legs of the rider also, with the knees much
“ raised, are in constant motion, and do not appear to belong to
“ him. Yet, from the Burmese saddle having a high peak, both
“ behind and before, it is difficult to be thrown out of it.”

The “ Shan” pony has of late years increased an inch, if not two in height, is a lighter and more active, although hardly a less powerful animal very often displaying most unmistakable signs of the Indian, Arab or Persian blood that has from time to time been left in Burma.

Fortunately “ Arabs” and “ Persians,” for the simple reason that more sires of those breeds have been left behind (as their masters obeyed the order of “ relief”) have done more than “ Country bred,” towards altering the type of pony; but traces of the wiry little “ Mahratta” the varmint half English looking “ Country-bred” from Calcutta, and we write with sorrow the small eye and shut nostril of some of our worst Indian breeds are now often to be seen. It is interesting to note these signs : where traces of the two last mentioned are found, the cross has generally come from the dam, and, as in most such cases, the produce is larger than it would have been with a full sized sire and a pony dam. Many of these ponies however have with their mothers’ merits inherited some of the irritability or timidity so often found in “ Country bred,” and also occasionally a large, and it may be a weak foot instead of the small hollow goat-like one of the real “ Shan.” Exactly the reverse is the case where the “ Arab,” “ Persian” or “ Mahratta” blood can be traced. There the cross has, by being from the small dam, apparently not so much increased in height as in lightness, activity, beauty and docility, (this last virtue however the “ Mahratta” has done little towards adding to) the

animal will still work under as heavy weights, but he will now jump and gallop as well as any "Deccanee," and instead of pulling, the chief difficulty with ponies fresh out of a "Shan" lot is to get a bit light enough for them. Their feet are so perfect that unless they are required for harness work over the stony roads of Rangoon, they need never be shod, and it is almost impossible to bring them down, unless they are very young and so over-ridden as to throw out splints, which, while forming, will always cause a horse to stumble.

It is as well to mention however, that while, unless for harness a Shan pony with good feet need never be shod in Burma, nor need he be in most up-country Indian stations, he should always be ridden with a little extra care during the first fortnight or so of the rains, as his feet have been worn down by six months' work over dry roads, and while the damp perhaps makes the hoof more tender, the stones have had their usual coating of dust washed off, and are more likely than ever to do harm.

This extra care need not however last more than a month and the little additional thought required to make a man ride on the soft side of a road during that time is well paid for.

Perhaps the greatest drawback the Burma pony has had to contend against in his struggle for favor is the notion, that although he seldom gets ill, when he does go wrong, he is more difficult to cure than any other horse. Hearsay has begotten, and indolence fostered this strange notion; indeed, this very chapter had its origin in the request of a Connoisseur in these ponies who implored the writer to say why they would not recover when once they got ill?

The reason is, not that a Burma pony, whether right or wrong, requires treatment different from his stable companions,

but the master believes the animal to be thoroughly hardened against disease or fatigue, and takes it out of him or neglects him accordingly.

Over exertion, when not quite fit to work, puts the little animal "of his feed," or makes him listless or perhaps worse for a day or two.

This would be at once discovered and its evil effects guarded against were a *horse* out of sorts; but the groom, like the master, believes that a pony should never be ill and so neglects the first warning. The simple loss of appetite, or what the master would in his own case term "dyspepsia," grows into colic, and even this is not, because the victim is a pony, thought seriously of until it has turned into inflammation. The master even now does not like to believe that his tough little hack can have much the matter with him, and stoutly asserts that "he will be all right to-morrow." By to-morrow, however, the most severe treatment would be of little avail, and ere many hours, there is ready for circulation another wonderful example of how impossible it is to cure a sick Pegu pony.

After long experience of Burma and its ponies, the writer can very confidently affirm that the rules for their treatment, whether sick or well, are those laid down for other horses in the Griffin's Aid-de-Camp.

As these ponies are very hardly dealt with and vilely mismanaged when they are first purchased, the following remarks may perhaps be interesting, if not of service, to residents in Burma.

The writer, who has been long in that country, is well aware of the difficulties every lover of horse-flesh has to encounter there: but he is not the less able to affirm, that, with a little care and system, condition may be just as well kept up and

that, whether with horses or ponies, the coats and eyes may be as blooming and bright in Rangoon as they should be in a good stable anywhere in India.

The ponies are, at the end of the monsoon, after having been entirely grass-fed, and many of them hardly ever mounted, brought down in hundreds from the Shan States, N. E. of British Burma, by perhaps the most original and most amusing horse-dealers in the world.

Although perhaps more industrious with his hands than any other Eastern (Chinese and Japanese of course excepted) the Shan is as lazy in all other respects as is the Burman.

An intending purchaser looking over a lot must do every thing for himself and may pull the animals about as he pleases; but, although his proceedings are regarded with indolent curiosity by the owners, it is almost impossible to get one of them or even their servants to show an animal off or to take an interest in his sale. A likely looking pony may strike the buyer's eye, but not one of the stout good-tempered-looking lads lounging in the wooden caravansary, round which the "lots" are tied as close as they can stand, will be at the trouble of moving the animal out, much less of mounting him, and most startling to a nervous purchaser would be the reasons given. Rather than exert himself, the Shan will without hesitation cry down his pony, "he is afraid to mount him." "The pony will throw the rider off—will run away—will fall down." &c. &c.

The only way is for the buyer to pull the animal out and to try it as he pleases. These ponies are, with hardly any exception, very gentle, and although they will at first very naturally wince and shrink from the saddle and bridle of civilisation, they may, as has been scores of times proved by the writer, be mounted bare-backed and perfectly managed with the halter by any ordinary rider, they must be sound, for they have neither been shod nor used, hereditary disease must be almost

unknown amongst them and they are far too active and clever to meet with many accidents during their colt-hood. A purchaser therefore, although he may pass over a really good pony, can hardly hit on a bad one. Let him, however, unless he has made up his mind to buy at once and take his new purchase away with him, beware, how he shows any preference, for if he be supposed to be a judge, eagerly watching his movements are a lot of most ill-favored Natives of India, owners of hack carriages, or purchasers for the Madras market, who knowing nothing of horses themselves are prepared to go a few rupees in advance of his offer so that if he commence a bargain in the morning he is very apt, on returning to finish it in the afternoon, to find his animal gone.

These difficulties got over however, we will suppose the purchase concluded, and, that, for from one hundred and fifty to two hundred rupees, a stout gentle and handsome little hack, worth at least twice those sums in India is carried off by the exulting buyer. Now the poor little animal's difficulties and mismanagement commence. His temper and digestion are at once violently assailed, and when after a few months of constant siege one or both give way, the master blindly ignoring cause and effect, wonders what ails the animal, and is apt to crave sympathy for his bad luck.

Up to the time of purchasing the pony has been fed on a short allowance of green grass. A *short* allowance because his former Shan owner was too lazy to cut a full feed; he is at once allowed to eat as much as he can gorge of the miserable grass brought into Rangoon during the dry season, and besides this, is generally over-fed on chenna and paddy. The consequence is that sooner or later, according to the stoutness of his digestion and in these matters horses are as delicate and variable as their masters, the pony goes wrong, gets "hide bound," "lampas" and uncertain in appetite, all the more so that he is very probably,

like many grass-fed animals, afflicted with worms. The monsoon commences, rich and rank grass springs up everywhere—the pony suddenly gets as much of it as he can eat, his grain-feeding is still kept up, and the consequence is that if he is not carried off by an attack of inflammation, his skin is affected and that mange or still more often that abominable disease “Prurigo” and occasionally Ringworm, so common amongst the Burmans themselves, and now and then warts, swollen legs, and other symptoms of thorough want of condition show themselves. Occasionally even in gentlemen’s stables although it is generally confined to those of the hack carriage proprietors a disease much too like “farcy” to be bearable shows itself. So much for mismanagement in feeding, now for the attacks on the temper of the pony, after he is purchased.

Up to this date he has never been shod now his model feet are at once cut up, and cut out of shape by one of the wretched *nalbunds* of Rangoon. The shoes, are for a *harness* pony on the Rangoon roads, necessary evils, but the vile system of shoeing there cannot but annoy the pony and perhaps cause him to blemish himself for life by cutting or brushing. Until purchased, he has never had any bit in his mouth, except a rope or a common Burmese Snaffle, his master, at once, furnishes him with a severely bitted double bridle, tightly curbed,—the pony naturally resists this and the odds are that the dread of having his mouth tortured by a violent wrench at starting makes him fidgetty to mount and fretful when moving.

The owner and his friends are not surprised at this, for “Pegu ponies almost always pull”—and the evil is met by a still more powerful bit which ere many weeks if hauled at with average strength and clumsiness effectually confirms their opinion and so deadens the once tender mouth that the pony can afford by hanging on the rider’s hand and giving him the

whole of its head to carry to furnish in the most orthodox fashion another proof of how sure a Burma pony is to pull.

The writer hopes that the following hints may be of use to some of his old friends in Burma.

In the first place he ventures to advise every one fond of horses in that country to stack, as soon as possible after the rains cease, as much hay and straw as will keep their animals for at least eight months. There cannot be much risk in doing this, for, if not required for home consumption, the fodder will always sell and grass cutters can be dispensed with.

The Burma grass makes excellent hay, which, as horse owners are now beginning to appreciate it, will each season be more easy to procure. A Burman never cuts his straw but leaves it after the ears have been taken off, to be trampled down by his buffaloes, and eventually to be set fire to as a lazy and therefore a thoroughly Burmese way of manuring for next year's crop.

If this straw be cut as soon as possible after the ears have been removed and while the rich grass which springs up with it is still in flower, it makes when mixed with ordinary hay, fodder which all horses will greedily eat and thrive on well. Any Burman farmer, if fairly spoken to, will allow his straw to be removed, but as the villagers themselves are too indolent to work, there may be a little difficulty in getting Indian coolies to go out into the country to cut it. It should be stacked upon a platform raised as are the Burmese houses, and while both hay and straw are being pressed down, common black salt or salt and water should be freely sprinkled over the forage. The stack should of course be securely thatched over, and on the side the monsoon beats. So much for preparation to receive a horse or pony.

When first purchased which would probably be in January, a fresh pony should be sparingly fed—half of his allowance of grass may, if the owner pleases, or doubts whether he has

stacked forage sufficient to last through the monsoon, be that daily sold in the Rangoon market, but it is better to avoid this if possible. Chenna and paddy bruised and mixed in proportions of one of the former to two of the latter should be given, but sparingly at first and increased as the animal's digestion and appetite may guide. Indeed it is a safe rule with fresh horses of all breeds, and the same rules apply with equal force to Burma ponies as to Australians, Capes, or Arabs, always to underfeed at first and increase by slow and small degrees. When condition is obtained however, keep it up on as high or as liberal feeding as the animal's constitution and the exercise he gets will admit of.

The above precaution alone should suffice to bring an animal through his first introduction to work, into sufficiently good order to enable him to stand almost any hard usage he may be called upon to encounter afterwards.

As the rains set in, the hay should be slightly increased or, if there is not enough of it to feed entirely on, a very little of the rank grass now springing up may be given, but always dried as much as possible, and the grain rations may perhaps be slightly added to. Grooming must now, more than at any other season, be insisted upon, for nowhere in India is it so difficult to keep up the action of the skin as it is in Burma at the commencement of the monsoon. Should the animal's coat get wrong a change of diet for a few days from bruised to boiled grain will often, at once prevent further mischief. "Cooltie" is not often to be had in Rangoon but "Oorud" can always be obtained and makes an excellent change as does boiled instead of bruised paddy. The writer is convinced that with horses as with men, half the cases of irritability of skin if not indeed of temper, a Doctor has to deal with spring from damaged digestion : should this change however not be sufficient and symptoms of mange or "Prurigo" appear, although the feeding on

boiled grain should still be kept up, a few of the seeds of the "Butea Frondosa" or "Palas Papara" will do wonders internally, while a little Kerosine oil rubbed over the irritable places, will, although it may for the time being, act almost as a slight blister, allay and remove all propensity to rub. Few men know the value of the Palas "Papara" seed, whether as a means of putting a horse into condition or as a vermifuge. It should however always be given when the stomach is nearly empty, say before morning grooming, six seeds or so, pounded down and given daily either with a very little grain or "Goor" *i. e.*, coarse country sugar, for a week or ten days—then discontinued for about the same period, and if necessary recommenced with, again and again, will generally brighten the eye and coat better and more safely than more complicated remedies.

It is known to every horse dealer in India, can be had for a few farthings in every bazar, and every servant knows it by its native name.

The seeds are thin, flat and kidney shaped.

In his book on "The useful plants in India" Major Heber Drury mentions this tree under the following name :

Butea Frondosa (<i>Roxb.</i>) Nat. ord. Leguminosæ.	
Bastard Teak—Eng.	Palasie—Malayalum,
Porasum—Tamil.	Palas—Hindoostanee.
Moduga—Teloogoo.	Palas, Dhak—Beng.

and says that when in flower it has a very striking appearance from the gaudy appearance of the bright scarlet blossoms—that "the name of Plassy so celebrated in Indian History is nothing more than Palas or Palasie, the Hindoostanee name for this beautiful tree." Also that the gum is used in medicine as a powerful astringent administered in the form of tincture and powder, and also that two or three seeds deprived of their outer covering are frequently given in cases of tape-worm.

The next disease fortunately is little known except amongst the ponies of hack carriage proprietors but, as it sometimes occurs in stables which should be better managed, it may as well be mentioned here, although in doing so the writer frankly owns that he knows neither the cause, the name, nor how it should be dealt with. It is caused, however, he presumes by injudicious feeding and bad grooming in a climate under which it is very difficult indeed to keep the action of the skin up to the mark. If it is not "farcy" its symptoms resemble that disease so strongly that, were a pony of the writer's attacked with it the brute should immediately be shot to keep him from contaminating others. For the symptoms, *vide* those of "farcy" in any book on horses. It is treated and apparently with success by the hack carriage men, by the barbarous firing, natives delight in, over and all about the sores. Of the three cases in a gentleman's stable the writer has met with, the first died within a few days. Another on which his owner tried a constant change of remedies without following any particular one for a week together, and would not destroy, became an object too loathsome to keep and probably died. The third was under the writer's charge at first—and was thus dealt with—the prescriptions having being got from a Veterinary Surgeon

Arsenic, three grains.

Cantharadis, two grains.

given in morning and evening feed, the sores well bathed three times a day with warm water and a solution of sulphate of copper afterwards applied. Liberal and varied diet was recommended but as that was difficult to obtain in Rangoon, the pony had in addition to his usual feed of grass, strong beef broth mixed with boiled rice every morning, as many carrots as could be procured and boiled Oorrud in place of the usual Burmese feed of chenna and paddy. This was continued for ten days, at the end of which the animal's master returned and startled at the liberal ration of beef and carrots his pony was receiving, took the advice of a native and had the animal fired

after their fashion. The pony although blemished for life certainly did recover and is still working in Rangoon. Whether the cure was caused by the medicine and high feeding or the firing iron, or both combined, the present writer does not venture to say.

He now winds up this chapter by begging those who may take the trouble of reading it to believe, that Burma ponies should be treated just as are other ponies, that they do not, until their mouths have been spoiled by the absurd notion that they will pull, require bits unlike those of other hackneys, and lastly, that when a man is fortunate enough to have a good Burma pony, the little hack is well worth taking care of.

The names of some ponies well known at Rangoon in 1865 and 1866, may serve as illustrations of each stamp of animal mentioned in this chapter.

Colonel Phayre's "Garibaldi," "Dowager," "Lottery," "Chance Shot," "Earth Stopper," "Exchange," "Chowsah," "Sunshine," "Punch," and "Shandy Gaff."

"Dowager" and "Lottery" two of the tallest ponies (13 hands and 1 inch at least,) known up to that date in Rangoon, showed unmistakeable signs of Indian Country-bred relationship, so did "Chance Shot," but in a less marked degree:—while the blue blood of the Desert must have contributed to give large eyes, open nostrils, broad brows, lean heads, hollow jowls and thin skin to the others, "Shandy Gaff" excepted, *he* was wonderfully like the old Mahratta tatto once so well known to and loved by every true sportsman in the Deccan. Even to his temper each of these ponies carried out the characteristics of the race from which he must have sprung.

The "Deccanee tattoo" !!! How many a liver-trying ride under a roasting sun and in the teeth of wind which felt almost as scorching as a blast from a furnace: but still how

many days of glorious sport and how many a cheery comrade do those words recall? No man, save the writer's old friend, Henry Shakespear, in the "Wild sports of India," has attempted to do justice to the game little slave to whose blood and gallant endurance as a hack, so many a day's sport, whether with gun or spear, has been due. We can vividly remember after many a broiling gallop, how welcome to the sight of weather-beaten rider and panting hackney used to be the varmint little "relief" as he stood under the scant shade of some "bauble" thorn. How alike in all essential points were the two ponies, how wide-awake and vicious-looking was the fresh one, and how often the little brute used to fight, until like Don Juan's hack, he

"Knew that he had a rider on his back."

When he would give up further mutiny, settle down to a stretching gallop and appear to enjoy it too. How we oft times used to reproach ourselves as we looked at the last pony, and how varmint and game were his looks as with big blood-like, but gentle eyes, the only *soft* things about a Mahratta, wide thin nostrils and lean head all brought out by violent exertion we pulled him up with quivering legs heaving flanks and shaking tail, to bear witness to having been rattled along at twelve miles an hour over a bad road and under a midday Deccan sun. Never, their tempers excepted, were there better ponies, and sin and shame will it be if the breed, used up as it was for baggage animals during the mutiny by Rose's, Whitlock's and other Central Indian columns, not to mention the enemy, be allowed to die out. It is said however that Sir Richard Temple will prevent this. and if he does, the thanks of many a light weight with a lighter purse, should be freely bestowed on him.

Few, even among sportsmen, understand or appreciate the pleasure of a long ride of, say sixty, or even half as many more miles at a stretch, with a change of horses at every stage.

First, there are always the pleasures of change, then difficulties and sometimes excitement or danger to encounter, and where did man show greater knowledge of his fellows than did Scott when he wrote, as causes why they should stray.

* * * "I sought to drive away
"The lazy hours of peaceful day;
"Slight cause will then suffice to guide
"A Knight's free foot-steps far and wide.
"A falcon flown, a grey hound strayed,
"The merry glance of mountain maid:
"Or if a path be dangerous known,
"The dangers' self is lure alone."

Next, to grapple with a feat of this kind, the rider must be in perfect health and good working condition; in themselves, the chief elements of pleasure to man; then there is that feeling of secret self glorification or satisfaction or conceit (call it what the reader pleases, we shall not I trust quarrel about a word,) which every one worth his or her salt must now and then give way to, in knowing that the feat you are doing with such ease to yourself, that you will bear it out jauntily at mess or ball that evening is not to be tried by half of your acquaintance. Again, in a long and fast ride, the rapid change of scenery or of the wayfarers, the constant attention to the horse, the chance of taking the wrong path and with it perhaps the certainty of loss of dinner and bed, distracts a man's thoughts from himself, and happier than most and more blessed must he be, whose thoughts do not require being thus distracted: Alas; we all find in one way or another, sooner or later, we acknowledge that there is truth in

"Post equitem sedet atra cura."

If any thing however could unseat the gloomy spirit from her evil perch, it would be an eighty-mile gallop across the Deccan.

Most of our best comrades have looked on the saddle as the mainspring to their sporting achievements; Widely scattered as "the graves of a household," lie the remains of many, whose shades are with us as we write. Suffocation by fumes of char-

coal in a Crimean hut on the night that Hedley Vicars so nearly lost the gallant life, he soon after gave up in a more worthy way*—was the sad end of our keenest ally: the Crimean, Burman and Indian Wars by bullet, steel, or disease disposed of many others; of the survivors, some are too heavy or too staid to ride; one hard riding subaltern against whom this writer has had more than one struggle over both flat and hurdle, is now a Clergyman, a popular preacher of Charity Sermons and ensconced in a snug vicarage in one of the most pleasant counties in England. Still amongst them surely there must remain some of the old leaven which will cause them not to forget—

“In festive times, midst other climes, to think of days so dear,
“And fill a cup, and drink it up, to saddle, spur and spear.”

VAGRANT.

NOTES ON INDIAN FIELD SPORTS.†

The writer must, in the first place, beseech the forbearance of his readers, in all cases where, although his intentions may be good, his execution may prove indifferent, for, although like old Warwick,

“Between two hawks, which flies the higher pitch,
Between two hounds, which hath the deeper note,
Between two blades, which hath the better temper,
Between two horses, which doth bear him best,
Between two girls, which hath the merrier eye,
He has perhaps some shallow spirit of judgment;”

in aught relating to pen ink or paper, his powers are very limited. And he trusts, moreover, that his brethren in the much

* Vide “Memorials of Captain H. Vicars” page 123

† These notes were not intended for print but were many years ago, hastily put together to be read after a small dinner party. They afterwards came out in the “NORTH LINCOLN SPHINX” a regimental periodical published by Vagrant’s old friends of the 2ND Battalion 10TH FOOT.

loved craft will aid him when his footing fails, and, with brotherly kindness, pardon the unworthiness of the writer, who presumes not for a moment, that he ranks high enough as a sportsman to *teach*, but who, as having from boyhood deeply loved all sports from rat-hunting upwards, hopes that, being himself an enthusiast in the matter, he may induce some brother, who has taken a higher degree, to furnish us with anecdotes of scenes where nerve and manhood have been called into play; of successful shots or closely contested spears: and as he feels that he is unfit to concoct a preface for himself, he must e'en borrow one from the *Old Forest Ranger*.

“Reader, if thou art, like us, a thorough-paced old sportsman: one who hath advanced through all the progressive stages of practical gunnery, from the firing of twopenny cannon on the King's birthday, to the scientific use of the grooved barrel. If thou hast a soul capable of appreciating the manifold beauties of that most perfect weapon the double-barreled rifle,—armed with which the solitary hunter wanders fearless among the savage beasts of the wilderness. If, in short, thou art as great an enthusiast in the noble art of woodcraft, as we were in our younger days, we trust even our imperfect sketches of Indian field-sports, may afford thee an hour's amusement. Thou wilt be ready to make every allowance for the defects of a brother sportsman's style; and to thee, therefore we think it unnecessary to make any apology for asking thee to accompany us into the woods. It may, perhaps, remind thee of old times.

Reader, if thou art no sportsman, than we do feel some delicacy in asking thee to join us, lest thou shouldst be disappointed. If thou art inclined to shoulder a rifle and follow us in our wanderings, we say come, and welcome! We shall be right proud of thy company; and will do our best to inspire thee with that wild spirit of adventure which imparts the principal charm to an Indian hunter's life. But we forewarn thee that thou wilt be introduced to savage men, and savage

beasts; and if such society liketh thee not, we pray thee to remember that the blame lies not at our door.

Reader, if thou art a critic, dogging our path for the unworthy purpose of noting every false step, and picking holes in a poor old man's coat, we say,—aroint thee! We go armed; and aged though we be, have not yet forgotten how to handle a rifle.

We hardly dare to hope that the gentler sex will so far honour us, as to illuminate our blood-stained pages with the sunshine of their eyes. But, in the event of our being so highly favored, we feel that to them some apology is due, for introducing them to such uncouth scenes.

Vailing our bonnet, then, and bowing full low, we would thus crave permission to address our fair reader.

We are but a poor old forester, gentle lady; one unfit to tell a tale in lady's bower, but, hunters of old were wont to offer up grim trophies of the chase at the shrine of beauty, so do we venture to lay this unworthy volume at thy feet. Spurn* it not gentle lady. It is all an old forester has to offer, and, for thy sake, he heartily wishes it more worthy of thy perusal."

BRITISH AND INDIAN FIELD SPORTS.

We are unable to contrast British and Indian field sports further than by attempting to point out that British Field Sports have the charms—and those no slight ones—of being pursued with greater ease, and less personal discomfort to their votary, and often, either under the eye of—or, at any rate, with every chance of his exploits coming to the knowledge of—some fair one, whose smiles and sympathy more than amply reward

him for the toils he has undergone, and spur him on to win further silvan honours; while the Indian sportsman, if he ever hopes to rise to a higher rank than the wielder of the "bird bolt" or hare courser, must prepare himself for unflinching exposure to both sun and storm, to discomforts of all sorts, and to all manner of queer companions, to constant failures, to trials of temper and health, to a wear and tear of constitution, which assuredly do not improve his appearance; and the greater his difficulties, the greater his glories and successes, the less his chance of being rewarded by the smiles of Beauty—the choicest boon sought for by all true soldiers and sportsmen from the time of the Round Table, or earlier still, from the days of King David, up to this latter half of the nineteenth century. But his rewards is great notwithstanding: perseverance and honest unswerving exertions are certain, sooner or later, to win for him some glorious trophies (for instance these bottle-labels formed of a tiger's fangs and claws, once the property of a famed "man-eater," the scourge of a district, the destroyer of seven human beings, during the five weeks prior to his death, which was caused by a single ball—the sportsman single handed and on foot): and certain to introduce him to some heart-thrilling scenes of forest fight, the memory of which can never be erased and which, even when eye grows dim, and hair grows grey, when he gets upon a strange horse with less confidence than in former days he would have faced alone and single-handed almost any forest foe; in short, to use the words of that glorious old hunting song—"*The mighty Boar*"—

“When age has weakened manhood's powers, and every nerve unbraced,” must make the aged pulse beat faster, retone for the moment the worn out nerve, and prove, while memory lasts, a source of honest pride to him, who has had the good luck to witness them.

The death of the "man-eating" tiger just alluded to, has always been a source of grim, but sincere satisfaction to the

sportsman who slew him, and who had, within a few days before seen the two last victims of the fell destroyer. One was a poor girl who had been only married a few days, and who while gathering firewood in the jungle close to the village, was carried away from the midst of some eight or ten other women, and a host of children, and whose body was, while still warm, traced up and recovered by the man who soon afterwards avenged her death. The sight of the last victim will never be forgotten by him, and so strongly did it impress itself on his memory, that even when leveling his weapon for the avenging shot, when life or death of man or beast rested almost upon the movement of a muscle, the upturned face of the dead man appeared to meet the marksman's eye, and haply aided hand and nerve to the successful issue. This tiger was, like all other "man-eaters" of a wandering and restless disposition; a few days after one unhappy wretch was carried off, another would be killed near a village perhaps eight miles off, *always in open day*, and, as it was impossible to say where the brute might next appear, the head civilian of the district had very kindly issued orders, that every death should at once be reported to the sportsman aforesaid, and if the relatives of the victim would allow the body to remain, a "mechan" or small platform, large enough for a couple of men to sit on, put up in the nearest tree. The relatives had been, nevertheless, on six occasions, deaf to all powers of persuasion, and invariably took away the body. A little before mess however, one cold evening, a breathless villager came running in, to report that, at a village six miles from cantonment, a man had just been killed by the tiger, (this was four or five days after, and about six miles from the scene of the death of the poor girl last spoken of) and that, as the man was a stranger, and had not any friends, his body was still on the ground, and a small mechan put up near it. As the moon would not rise until about nine o'clock, and as any preparations that were to be made must have been completed by the time the report was brought in, it only remained to send on the guns, and for the

sportsman, who knew every inch of the country, to canter after them as soon as dinner was over. He thus arrived at the village before the moon rose, and heard the particulars of the "kill." A party of "Koonds" (mountaineers from the hill tracts of "Orissa,") had, on their way to a neighbouring fair, halted to rest within a couple of hundred yards of the village, and the tiger, which had probably been following them for some distance had struck down one from their midst, while the others fled. The tiger had dragged the body a few yards and left it, and thus allowed a villager to prepare a seat in a tree before sunset. This man, the sportsman, and a trusty and well proved gun-carrier, started for the tree, getting to which was by no means devoid of danger. About half way, the villager's heart failed him, and he turned back, after pointing out the position of the so-called tree, on which was the mechan which was silently and hastily climbed. It was an old mango stump, barely six feet from the ground, and though a few remains of branches, and the leaves of a creeper which covered them, afforded means for putting up the mechan, and screening the marksman, it was by no means beyond the reach of a tiger's spring, and all the more accessible, that it was beneath a bank over which the beast was supposed to come. Three or four bushes detached from the jungle, which lay one hundred yards or so beyond were about it, under one of these, hardly a spear's length off, lay an indistinct black mass, which was instinctively known to be the dead man, for it was yet impossible to see more. The moon, however, rose almost immediately and as all around was lightened up, the body came into full view. It was that of a fine powerful man, every line of his face perfectly visible, as he lay stretched on his back in the cold bright moonlight, within a few feet of the marksman, and, as the night breeze moved his long hair and beard, thus throwing light and shade over his features; it required an effort to convince the watcher that they were not stirred by life. The lower part of the body was partly in shadow of the bush under which it lay

and while one leg was distinctly visible only half of the other could be seen, and it was impossible to be certain whether that leg, from the knee down, was bent under the body, or had been carried off, and, childish as the confession may now appear, this uncertainty worried the watcher so sorely, that he was several times during the night all but tempted to get down and satisfy his curiosity: so much indeed, that, when a few days afterwards, eye and nerve were called into play, on coming on foot and alone upon the tiger, the dead body appeared to the mind's eye as visible as was the tiger to the real one. The tiger's voice was heard at a distance once during the night, but he was too wary to approach the feast, and the only animal which did, was a female bear, who, with a couple of ill-tempered and whining babies on her back, was going to market in the nearest sugar-cane field: *she* was, of course, under the circumstances, unmolested. At daylight, the watcher, benumbed, for the night was intensely cold, solved the mystery of the half seen leg; from a little above the knee, it had been taken off almost as cleanly as if it had been cut by a hatchet. This was the tiger's last victim: a few days afterwards, he was met and accounted for. But to return to the rewards of a sportsman.

To the man who is a naturalist, or an enthusiast in scenery—and what true sportsman is not both of these?—the rewards are great. If he is a naturalist, even the blankest day, as far as “blood” is concerned, can hardly be gone through without his having become acquainted with the manners and customs of some bird or beast; or seeing, though he may not be botanist enough to know its name, some new and interesting plant, or flower, or of enjoying some “gem” of still life, or landscape which if it could be transferred to a frame, would make the fortune of an artist.*

* APPROPOS of this, pardon an attempt to describe a scene, which to the narrator has always vividly recalled Landseer's well known picture “The Sanctuary:” a magnificent sketch, which no one but Landseer could have conceived, and few but sportsmen witnessed. This is told from memory both of sketch and scene, and; even were it not, no description by this pen could do justice to Landseer's picture, which represents a lonely mountain lake—the bit of landscape most dear to all those who have been brought up amidst wild up-land scenery—just lit up by a sun hardly above the horizon: in the fore-ground is a noble red-deer, who has just crossed the lake, and, while wading to shore, has disturbed a flock of

There is a keen enjoyment of real beauty in seeing, as all who have tried their pith on large game must have seen, bits of forest life, as they never can be witnessed by any one save a sportsman. The herd of deer, the most graceful animal, taken all in all, or in almost any one of their almost endless varieties, that ever gladdened the heart of man, grazing unconscious of the neighbourhood of their deadliest enemy, and being allowed to pass unscathed and unscared : a magnificent peacock, stalking in all his insolent beauty, within a few feet of the ambushed hunter; the most wary of all animals, the porcupine, or one of the grandest—the “Mighty Boar”—in all his bristly power, or one of the strangest, the female bear; with her ill-tempered ungainly offspring clinging to her back, passing slowly, because securely by—secure, because the hunter’s quest for that day is some more lordly game.

These and many others, which it would take hours, not minutes, to enumerate, are the rewards of the sportsman in

wild ducks feeding amongst the rushes : none of the birds are however alarmed ; some, glad of an excuse for flight, have got up, but are merely circling round, presently to settle again with the rest ; those more sedate, or probably more hungry, will hardly get out of the way of the stag, knowing that he too, like each of their party, is wild and free. Is there a man who looking on that life-like picture has not longed to witness its original, and (let us tell the truth in its rudest term) to be within shot of its principal actor ! Substitute for the red deer as beautiful, although not so stately an animal—a full grown spotted stag of India (*CERVUS AXIS* of Naturalists), and for the Scotch tarn, a woodland lake, amongst the pestilential but lovely hills of the deadly Golcondah Zemindary, and this historian saw the story of that picture acted in the life. He had, while in pursuit of the red jungle-fowl (*GALLUS FERRUGINEUS*) unwisely left his ball gun with an attendant ; a flock of wild ducks were observed feeding near the edge of a lake, and while he was getting up to them, he saw a spotted stag deliberately canter down to the opposite beach, and swim directly across to where he was concealed : passing through the wild ducks, some rising, others merely paddling out of his way, the stag landed, the water raining from his glossy flanks as he shook himself after reaching the shore, and then cantered lazily away. All this was so close to the man who tells this story, that the shot-gun was more than once brought to bear on the graceful beast’s head with an idea that he might be stopped. Had the pellets been Nos. 3 instead of No. 5, or an Ely’s cartridge been in the gun, the trigger would have been pulled with the almost certainty of a kill, but, as it was, the sportsman had not the heart to mangle or blind so beautiful an animal without a good and sufficient excuse.

almost any clime, but especially in atropical one. And now, as regards the smiles of those —whose smiles are our dearest reward. From the time we first don the distinguishing male garment, until the heart's action is o'er, I would only, with all humility, urge on behalf of my brethren who are votaries of Indian field sports, that, as certainly as the chase is mimic war, and, as certainly as the guiding star of all true soldiers has been since the earliest ages, the softer sex; so assuredly are all true sportsmen their most devoted, most humble, and most constant slaves, and that, though sun and storm may sear the checks, exposure and excitement silver the hair of a sportsman sooner than those of men who have not had the luck to be tried in the same way; or want of practice in conversation (your sportsman is almost always a rather silent man. unless with those to whom he is well acquainted, or until he is drawn out) may make him a more uninteresting drawing-room companion, there beat not in any clime hearts more true than those of the sportsmen of India

ANTIQUITY OF EASTERN FIELD SPORTS.

As regards the antiquity of Eastern field sports, it is recorded, that nearly three thousand six hundred years ago, Esau was a cunning (that is an experienced) hunter, and that, albeit his weapons were only the bow and arrow, he was fond of one of our most fascinating sports, deer-stalking; and there is little doubt that the venison he sought when he was so ruthlessly taken in, to say the least of it, by his brother, was that of the gazelle, one species of which is well known to Indian sportsmen under the name of Goat Antelope, "Chikara," or Ravine Deer, and the flesh of which, if the animal is shot anywhere near wheat lands, or where the grass is at all high, is without doubt very savoury meat.

So much for the antiquity of deer stalking. Of the chase of the lion and bear, David's and Simpson's histories furnish us

proofs sufficient that the lions bagged by these heroes were, with little doubt, nearly the same as the animal so well known to the Bombay Sportsman (unhappily not to those of Madras and Bengal) as the Goozerat Lion, and the bear a relation of the well known *Ursus Labiatus*, the black bear of Hindoostan, which most foresters from Cape Comorin to Cabool, from Bombay to Cuttack, have at some time or another, found to be a "foeman worthy of their" *mettle*, let the *metal* brought into play be steel or lead, and under the unpleasantly rough handling of one of which, the writer was, some time ago, taught to take a very practical view of the feelings of a rat when being worried by a good terrier.

Then, as regards "Boar Hunting," or, to use the fondly familiar term dearest to all those who have ever "tallyhoed" with wild delight at the ravishing view of the bristly backs of a "sunder" going away, or who have ever spurred a noble steed into downright fight with a scarcely less noble foe, "Pig Sticking!" what more worthy proof have we that it is a good old sport deeply interesting to ladies, than the simple fact that it was in following it Adonis died!

"O let not sapient moralists our well loved sport decry,
We'll draw a warrant for the game from all antiquity,
T'was thus Meleager's prowess in the chase was tried,
T'was thus Ascanius' youth was fired,
T'was thus Adonis died."

Was not the first of these noble sportsmen the Captain of the Calydonian Hunt, the earliest "Tent Club," and has not hog-hunting flourished from his days even to those of your unworthy, yet devoted slave, fairest lady. who, when this writer was the Captain of the grand old Nagpore Hunt used to ride "Dundee?"

"The Scots can rein a mettled steed
And love to couch a spear."

but Meleager's was not the hunt that used to give pleasant balls in Edinburgh: but one at which the earliest "*first spear*"

we read of was taken by one of your own sex ; the lovely ATALANTA, of whom we know that she was the fastest young lady of her period and did quite as much mischief to her admirers as does any beautiful being of the present day. She appears to have treated them somewhat hardly it is true : but what does it matter after all, whether a slow man is sacrificed by a fast dance at a gallop, or whether he has to run for his life as had her lovers ? She likewise deserves vast credit for having introduced the only fashion which has never changed, lasted, let us say, for two thousand years, viz. that of giving the tusks of the boar to the gainer of "first spear" and can we have a stronger proof that hog-hunting is a great and noble sport ? Think how often fashions have altered since we first saw each other, and then imagine one far far older than the nineteenth century.

Almost all Eastern soldiers have been sportsmen. Alexander the Great was a hog-hunter, so was Wellington, so was William Havelock, who was killed at Ramnugger, so, and keener than most, was the renowned Sir Walter Gilbert ; so was Sutherland, well known as one of the founders of the Irregular Horse, and a writer under the name of "Sabre," from the fact of his liking to finish off a pig with that weapon, instead of with the legitimate spear, a feat which we have often wondered has not often been followed, but the fact is we fancy that the spear to those who know how to handle it, is so charming, so fascinating a weapon, that they cannot bear to part with it. So was Jacob, so are, and were, the Malcolms, one of whom was our pastor and master in all that related to large game. So, last and best sportsman of all, either mounted or on foot, in saddle or with trigger, was our world-known "Bayard" of Bombay, the glorious James Outram, the truest type of Chivalry that modern times or trustworthy records tell of.

One of the very pleasantest sights we can think of, was to see the Governor and Commander-in-Chief of Madras, Sir

William Denison and Sir Hope Grant, good soldiers both, loved and respected as Governor or Commander-in-Chief, riding to hounds, taking the ground as it came and watching their sport as only keen hunters can.

QUALIFICATIONS OF AN INDIAN SPORTSMAN.

Of the qualifications of the sportsman, it is by no means an easy matter, with due humility, to speak. To the greatest of all blessings, health, and strength, he must add not a few virtues; patience and perseverance, pluck and endurance, he *must* have; or success will not smile upon his exertions. In fact, the words of our grand old hunting psalm, with all reverence be the word spoken, can be applied to almost all pursuits of large game, quite as well as to hog-hunting,

“ Youth’s daring courage, manhood’s fire,
Firm hand and eager eye,
Does he require who dares aspire
To see the grey boar die.”

He must be prepared almost at any moment to face discomforts of the minor kind, in dress, in eating and in drinking; and, above all,—and about the hardest to endure—in sleeping; he must be satisfied to sleep in the open air, even during a heavy fall of rain. The present writer, while studying under his first master in the use of the spear—a man who, like many others of our friends, fell a victim to his daring devotion to his duty during the mutiny—once had the evil luck to pass the night—sleep he could not—with some five hundred convicts chained down by the legs, in a close mud-hut called, by courtesy, a jail and regarding which night’s rest he can only say, that, though it was supposed to be passed on leave, and to count as sport, it was about the most uncomfortable one in his life.

Added to the virtues which I have ventured to state are common to *all* sportsmen, are two others; and for *these* I trust ladies will give *all* the sportsmen of India credit:—*temperance* and *good temper*—the first absolutely essential—the second very nearly so. Without the first, a man must very soon succumb to hard work and exposure in a tropical climate, without the second, the pursuit of large game will, notwithstanding its endless fascinations, ever be as gall and wormwood.

One or two of the sorest trials of temper the writer ever has witnessed, took place at hog-hunting parties; but it is almost impossible, unless by an old hog-hunter, to conceive the disappointment the men experienced; however, to give some faint idea of what they *did* feel, we shall extract another page from “The Old Forest Ranger,” who, in far better terms than we can use, endeavours to describe that glorious sport, of which our friend Major H. Shakespear, of the Irregular Cavalry—who has had more and better experience of the pursuit of large game than most men in India, or at home—gives as his opinion that hog-hunting, especially in the hilly countries of the Deccan and Nagpore, is the very first sport in the world. *Ergo*, he devotes the first chapter of his most interesting book on the Wild Sports of India to a description of it, and, while on the subject, let us endeavour to impart to you for the moment a particle of the enthusiasm, which all your friends who know the sport, and who have tasted the keen delight of drawing first blood after a closely contested run’ hardiy a horse’s length in front of two much loved and hard-riding comrades, ever feel for it, and the recollection of which is so well described in our two old hunting songs “Saddle, spur and spear” and “The Boar” the only *good* hunting songs we have ever heard, and the fact that the sport inspired the man, who wrote them, is of itself no mean proof of its merits.

SADDLE SPUR AND SPEAR

in—"My Harp and Lute"

1—LET others boast and proudly toast,
The light of ladies' eyes,
And swear the rose less perfume throws
Than Beauty's fragrant sighs;
That bright red lips in hue eclipse
The ruby's radiant gem;
That woman's far the brightest star
In nature's diadem.
Yet since for me no joys I see
In all the sex can show,
And smile or tear alike appear,
Unheeded flash or flow—
I'll change my theme, and fondly dream,
True sportsman pledge me here—
And fill the cup, and drain it up
To Saddle, Spur, and Spear.

2—When day-spring's light first crowns each height
And tips the diamond dew,
We quick bestride our steeds of pride
To scour the jungle through.
With loosen'd rein the jovial train
Slow to the covert throng;
But would not stir without a spur
To coax their nags along.
We high uprear the glitt'ring spear,
Far flashing gainst the sky,
With hope elate anticipate
To see the wild Boar die.
With such bright hopes e'en misanthropes
Would pledge a bumper here—
And fill the cup, and drain it up
To Saddle, Spur, and Spear.

3—T'were vain to tell the magic spell
That fires the hunter's eye,
When shout and roar arouse the Boar,
And force him forth to fly.
His rage at first, his glorious burst
Dark dashing through the flood;
His bristly might, his meteor flight,
And his death of foam and blood.
Oh ! who hath been in such a scene,
That scene can e'er forget?
In sorrow's mood, in solitude,
That dream will haunt him yet.

Mid festal times in other climes,
 He'll think of days so dear—
 And fill his cup, and drain it up
 To Saddle, Spur, and Spear.

4—But while we sing, Time's rapid wing
 This lesson seems to teach:
 The joy and bliss of sport like this
 Are yet within our reach.
 Then let's away at break of day,
 Ride vale and hill-top o'er;
 Scale mountain's side' or stem the tide,
 To spear the flying Boar.
 And time may then bring eve again,
 When we at pleasure's shrine
 To stay his flight for one gay night,
 Can dip his wing in wine:
 And ere we part, pledge hand and heart
 Once more to rally here—
 And fill the cup, and drain it up
 To Saddle, Spur, and Spear.

THE MIGHTY BOAR

Air—"The Red Red Rose"

1.—THE Boar, the mighty Boar's my theme,
 Whate'er the wise may say—
 My morning hope, my midnight dream,
 My thought throughout the day.
 Youth's daring spirit, manhood's fire,
 Firm hand and eagle eye,
 Do they require who dare aspire
 To see the wild Boar die.

CHORUS—Then pledge the Boar, the mighty Boar,
 Fill high the cup with me—
 Here's luck to all who fear no fall,
 And the next grey Boar we see?

2.—We envy not the rich their wealth,
 Nor kings their crown'd career—
 The saddle is our throne of health,
 Our sceptre is the spear.
 We rival, too, the warrior's pride,
 Deep stain'd with purple gore;
 For our field of Fame's the jungle side,
 And our foe's the jungle Boar.

CHORUS—Then pledge the Boar, the mighty Boar,
 Fill high the cup with me—
 Here's luck to all who fear no fall,
 And the next grey Boar we see?

3.—When age hath weakened manhood's powers,
 And every nerve unbrac'd,
 Those scenes of joy shall still be ours,
 On mem'ry's tablet trac'd.
 For with the friends whom death has spared,
 When youth's wild course is run,
 We'll tell of the chases we have shared,
 And the tushes we have won.

CHORUS—Then pledge the Boar, the mighty Boar,
 Fill high the cup with me—
 Here's luck to all who fear no fall,
 And the next grey Boar we see?

And now for the Old Forest Ranger's account of the sport.

"If excitement be the test by which to estimate the comparative merits of any sport, hog-hunting must rank before every other. Try it by any other standard, its universal popularity, the enthusiasm of its followers, and the preference given it in a country where the tiger even is less noticed than the boar, and it must be granted that there is some peculiar fascination in this noble sport. Men who have followed hounds at home, and shared in all the field sports of Europe and Asia, talk of it with rapture; and such a scene of animation, of generous rivalry, and true sporting feeling, as is exhibited at the great hunting meetings, surpasses anything I have ever met with elsewhere.* One word in explanation of rivalry, lest I should

* This is very true, few days could be pleasanter than those passed with the Nagpore Hunt of 69-70-71, and some of the struggles for spears were well worth going for to see, when as one of our best men writes—

"Chankee's" bheer was then well known,
 And "Gogee's" rumnah high
 At "Baila" where the beetuls grown,
 Big boars were wont to lie.
 There's "Nagie" too of well known fame
 With "Jambree" to its right,
 And "Khoppa" too has earned a name
 For boars that run and fight.
 And oft o'er "Karlee's" stony hill
 We've "laid into" a hog,
 At "Waree" too we've had a kill
 And soused into its bog.
 And in "Mahadoolah's" carries deep
 We've roused our stubborn foe."

mislead. Killing a boar is quite a secondary consideration to taking the first spear. This is the powerful incentive which causes the keen excitement of hog-hunting, while men are struggling, as if for life or death, to draw first blood. There must be an antagonist to conquer as well a boar to overcome, and a true sportsman would scarcely value the fastest run, ending in a brilliant death without an opponent to ride against him for the spear of honor. The slightest touch that stains his blade with one crimson drop is enough. He is said to have killed the hog; and the others who assist in despatching him, even he who gives the death-blow to a furious boar at bay, claim no share in the honor which belongs exclusively to him who first drew blood. The influence of this feeling makes men ride with desperation beyond what the best contested steeple-chase, or the hardest struggle for the lead with hounds, generally exhibits.

“Those who have never seen a wild boar could hardly credit his speed. Upon a dead plain, like a race-course, a fast Arab cannot overtake a lanky outlying boar, with a start of fifty yards, in less than half a mile. Conceive, then, what such an animal can do across a country cut up by deep ravines, many not practicable except by an in and out jump. These the boar can cross much quicker than the cleverest horse can follow; and his bottom is so great, that, unless you can press him hard enough to blow him, he will run for ever. Hogs are generally found in the worst part of a difficult country, and they invariably select a line abounding in obstructions. Nullahs with blind banks, steep rocky descents, thorny jungles, which nearly tear the rider from his horse, and frequently nail his boots to his legs, are the usual variations of ground, which even in its best parts, frequently resembles a plate covered with walnut shells. Over this country the game little Arab is pressed at his utmost speed, spurs clashing to get one more stride out of him—no holding—no craning—you may throw

him down, but you must go your best, be the ground what it may. When the boar is overtaken, after a long run, then comes the thrilling moment, if a man worth beating is at your haunches. The spear is perhaps quivering, within an inch of the mark, and every nerve is strained to gain that inch, although, perhaps your good honest horse has done his best, and answers only by a groan to every stroke of the spur. Your rival is coming up—his horse's head reaches your knee—he creeps, nearer, nearer—every thought is absorbed in one whirling maddening feeling, the thirst of conquest. The two foaming Arabs are neck and neck, panting with fatigue, yet still struggling with the same spirit of rivalry as their riders. First one head is in front—then another. Oh, for one yard more, and the deed were done—Spears are lengthened to their utmost stretch—a blade disappears, is withdrawn, dimmed with blood—and the spear is won: If a boar is reached before he gets blown, he turns with great rapidity as soon as the leading horse is within a few paces of him, throwing him out and making him lose much ground, even well in hand, and turning rapidly. The second man then prepared to make his rush frequently takes the spear; but it sometimes happens that half-a-dozen riders are thus baulked in succession, by a speedy hog, before the contest ends. By this time, being usually too much blown to run further, the boar stands at bay, and charges every one who approaches. It is at this period of the chase that horses are apt to get ripped, without good management."

And now hear what Henry Shakespear says of the sport.

"No one but he who has seen it would believe that the wild hog of India can, on his own ground out-pace, at his first burst, and run away from the fastest Arab race-horse; but such is the fact. Let the hog be mountain born and bred, having to travel in certain seasons of the year, forty or fifty miles every night for his food, then try him on his own hill-side, or over the rock and bush of the Deccan, and I will back the hog against the hunter.

"This is a ground which few men will ride over. because their horse's legs suffer so severely that they cannot afford to do it, even should they themselves have the nerve necessary for the work.

"Again, no man who has not been an eye-witness of the desperate courage of the wild hog, would believe in his utter recklessness of life, or in the fierceness that will make him run up the hunter's spear, which has passed through his vitals, until he buries his tusk in the body of the horse, or, it may be, in the leg of the rider."

And remember, and bear it well in mind, that the great fascination of this sport, is the generous rivalry it calls forth between man and man, between friends "brethren in arms yet rivals in renown," in a heart-stirring game, the honor of which cannot be won without nerve, manhood and science being called into play, and remember, that the honor consists in the feat of drawing the "first blood" from the boar, and for this, men risk their lives and limbs, money and horses, much more cheerfully than in any other sport we know of.

But to return to our trial of temper. Once upon a time "in the days when we went pig-sticking, a long time ago," the writer was quartered in a hilly and jungly district, where, though game of all sorts abounded, and hogs were in scores, neither record nor legend told of one having been speared; or of any attempt having been made to spear one, and it was even considered orthodox to shoot them—a deed which, in any riding country, is looked upon by all good men and true, as a crime of the blackest dye. The oldest sporting authority in the district, a Colonel and a C. B., who had been for almost a life time in political employ there, and who knew every corner of it, scouted the idea of its being within the power of man to get hog into the open, in any part of it, for remember, that a boar is the most difficult animal we know of to dislodge from his fast-

nesses, and that, with perhaps the exception of the tiger, or panther, he is, until roused to fury, the most cunning in all that relates to baffling those who are trying to drive him forth from his covers to the plain.

A vagrant sportsman, however, whom we shall designate the "captain"—fill up his name from the army list as best pleases you—fresh in the district, was of opinion, that there was a spot within reach of the head-quarters of it, where pig might be killed as they should be, and actually saved a fine young boar from being murdered by some men who wanted to shoot the gallant beast! The political colonel held to his opinion, the captain to his: excitement ran so high in consequence, that the head civilian of the district organized a party, which was to come off when a noted hog-hunter from another station should arrive. He came about two months afterwards, and a very merry dinner-party of twelve assembled at the collector's house, six of them ladies, and of these one half were spinsters, a very unusual number in India, but all six, and *that* is by no means an unusual occurrence in India. were pretty and fascinating! The horses had been sent on to the ground which was about two marches off, and it only remained for the riders to run out at night in palkees, hunt, and ride in, to tell of their success at dinner the following day. The chances of the morrow's sport were of course discussed, and the ladies were good enough to bestow some interest on the subject, and thus inflame the anxiety of each sportsman to win the spear of honor. The morrow found them, three in number, at the jungle side, and here we shall attempt to describe the ground, the horses, and the men.

The difficulties of the "*beat*" no man but a scientific hog-hunter could appreciate; suffice to say that there was only one line of country over which there was the most remote chance of killing a hog, and that the odds were heavy that the animals]

would break back through the beaters, or otherwise baffle them. The run was a short one—over pretty fair ground, full of holes, however, and, at a little more than two-thirds of the way, there was a thick clump of bamboos, which, if a hog gained, he would be, for the time at any rate, safe from pursuit; two of the men—both right well mounted on Arabs—were members of the Madras Civil Service, a body in whose ranks are some of our greatest friends, and amongst whom are perhaps a larger proportion of good and well-mounted horsemen than any equal number of British gentlemen in India can furnish. The first—whom we shall call the “head assistant”—was a heavy man, but an excellent spear, and not at all likely to miss a chance; and the other, W. K.* was the boast of the district, and, on this occasion, was mounted on his pet Arab “Socks,” a horse of great fame. Between W. K. and the captain there had been, a warm friendship, many years old, but though they had seen each other ride after jackals, across country, and such “fancy work,” this was the first occasion upon which they had met to ride for a spear. The captain, who was also the manager of the beat, was mounted on a very powerful and fast Australian.

The beat commenced : science won the day ; and by a master stroke of manœuvre on the captain’s part—on which that worthy to this day prides himself—a noble hog burst into the open, and went racing away over the very line of country it was intended he should take

“ Ride ”†

* The last overland told us of his death. Conscientious and hardworking in duty, a good christian, a warm and gentle friend, hospitable to a proverb, even in the days, now passed away, of Indian hospitality, few men could be more loved or mourned for.

†vii—A Captain to be chosen by vote.

ix —In the field the Captain to have the entire management of the beating, &c

x—On the pig breaking no one to give chase till the Captain gives the word “Ride.”

Extracts from Rules of the Nagpore Hunt.

and then

“Each horseman stout, nor sighed, nor prayed,
Nor saint nor ladye called to aid—
Each bent his head, and couched his spear,
And spurred his steed to full career !”

The burst was a glorious one; the boar, a lanky hill fellow, as fast as a deer for the distance he had to go, and certain to fight like a hero when reached; the men all got away together. The Captain's Australian got a slight lead, and kept it, but not two lengths off, and a little to the right, on the spear hand too, were K. and “Socks,” straining every muscle to get up; to the left, prevented by his weight from being so far forward, but certain, if the hog made any turn in his direction, not to give him a chance, rode our head assistant. The clump of bamboos is all but reached, as the first man gets within spear's length. *Hurra! Who says a pig cannot be killed here?* The captain smiles grimly, as spur and bridle collect the good horse for the final rush, he feels, “the stern joy that warriors feel in foeman worthy of their steel,” for are not W. K. and “Socks”—the man and horse most renowned in the district—doing their best to win the spear, and doing it in vain? The keen, cruel blade glitters within a foot of the hog, another bound and—is the spear won? are you to go back to dinner the hero of the day? Alas! to this hour, the wretched bungler tries in vain to account for the miss, which, in our opinion, was simply caused by over conceit at the moment. The blade, instead of passing deep into the brawny shoulder it was intended to transfix, glides over the bristles, merely ruffling the feathers, so to speak, without drawing one drop of blood, and is raised aloft as bright and unclouded with crimson as before. If, as the half maddened rider reversed his spear and struck back at the pig, in vain hope of reaching him as the horse rushed past, a hasty word was uttered, let us trust that the recording angel blotted it out with a tear. The boar is missed however, and, with a growl of defiance and hate, dashing the foam off his tusks with that sideward and upward toss of the head that ever means mischief, the gallant

springs into the clump, is saved for the moment, and perhaps has the satisfaction of seeing the head assistant and his grey—big-man and big-horse—come down a crashing fall within a few yards of the spot. No harm, however is discovered at the time, although the Arab never recovered that day's work.

As blood has not been drawn, the excitement is greater than before; a few beaters will turn the boar out of his covert and now no matter which direction he breaks in, he must die, and the odds are that he will not attempt to run more than a few yards, but that he will charge the first that gets up to him. W. K. and the captain are in the height of their excitement, force their horses as far as possible into the clump, in the hope that the pig will charge one of them, and thus allow his rider to win the coveted spear. And this is a rash proceedings that all good hog-hunters would condemn, for if a hog charge when a horse is not pretty nearly at speed, he is almost sure to run himself up the spear and do mischief.

The boar, however, luckily for them, will not accept the challenge, and the men and horses fret for a few minutes more, until eight or ten of the beaters, some armed with rude spears, others with sticks, and attended by a few curs, come up and dive into the clump to turn him out. The excitement is greater than ever; presently an angry roar—for the voice of an infuriated boar is nothing short of that—followed by the yells of the coolies, and the howls of an unhappy cur, that has got within reach of the brute's tusk, proclaim that he is on foot, and about to burst in no amiable mood. The head assistant creeps round to the edge of the cover where he thinks the pig is most likely to break, and thus equalize his chance against the lighter weights, who, jealous of each other—as none but two such friends can be—watch;—their good horses, as excited as their riders, ready to dash at the hog the moment he appears. Another roar, another yell, another howl from a wounded dog, and

out, right between W. K. and the captain, bursts into open day a wretched half naked savage brandishing a bloody spear and screaming with fiendish delight "My Lord I've killed him, I've killed him!"

It was too true! The wretch without a soul beyond pork and into whose hands some horse-keeper tempted by the evil one, entrusted a spare spear, had, while the gallant foe's attention was taken up with his other enemies, crawled, as none but a lithe and half naked savage can, close to the boar and stabbed him to the heart!

Here was a trial of temper, which few but those who had been educated to bear such trials, as Indian sportsmen are, could have withstood. The wretch who thus dared to trifle with the best feelings of three well armed, excited men, and rob them of their hard-fought for honors, was not then and there struck down, had not his worthless head broken with a spear shaft, was neither sworn at nor ridden under foot, but, as the corpse of the gallant boar, so barbarously, so foully, so basely murdered, was dragged into the lists where he fully intended to have met a fair foe in fair fight, the horsemen "silently gazed on the face of the dead," and then bitterly thought how impossible it would be to make the ladies appreciate the disappointment. For this—to see a pig stuck by a coolie, had W. K. marched "Socks" nearly two hundred miles! For this had our head assistant—good natured fellow that he always was, although he knew his weight would make him ride at a disadvantage—given up his best shooting ground! For this had the captain's chestnut been trained like a race horse! Let us draw a curtain over the heart-rending scene, and beseech pardon and grace from the ladies fair, who have condescended to listen to so long-winded an account of what can scarcely interest them.

And now, before I wind up, let me touch upon the memory of dear "Turquoise,"* the best, the nearest to perfection in the shape of a horse that his master ever knew; an Arab as beautiful as he was brave, so fiery that, with the exception of *three* who ever mounted him, he was a determined runaway; so gentle, that one of those *three* was a native child of twelve years old: so brave, that when the first pig he was ever ridden at fought himself up the spear, wrenching the weapon out of the horseman's hand, striking his boot and digging three deep holes into the gallant Arab's chest, he quailed not and though the angry boar, with the spear sticking erect in him, brought himself to bay, and charged every horse that came near him so furiously that not one of the others would stand the onset, "Turquoise" allowed his master to take a spear from another sportsman and, bleeding as he was, carried his rider up to the foe as if it had been a kitten and thus enabled the blow to be a finishing one, so fleet and staunch that he caused the death of the Nackapully boar whose cunning and speed had baffled many good horses and men, so bold yet cool in fight that he closed within spear's reach of an angry bear, quite as readily as would have done with a boar and allowed his master to use the weapon freely. Noble specimen of desert blood "*Sans peur et sans reproche*."

But to conclude. The first half of this paper was written the week before we received Shakespear's *Wild Sports of India*, we are indeed delighted to find that our old friend has backed up our theory regarding sabreing hog by practice. And now the only amend we can make for the long winded article we have imposed on our readers, or the only apologies we can offer for any egotism we have been guilty of, consist in throwing ourselves on your generosity, as far as forgiveness of all errors in words and matter go: and in defence of a subject in which,

*Where is there a horse that can equal in blood or beauty, a pure bred "Nedgee" Arab, white, with a dark skin, that when warm, shines blue through the glossy silvery hair.

come what may, we shall be ever deeply interested, begging you to listen to a couple of pages in which Henry Shakespear, a good and keen sportsman, advocates the Wild Sports of India.

“Ye anxious parents, who perchance read or hear of the title of my book, with a full determination and dread resolve that your boys shall not peruse or obtain it, bear with me a little, while I explain to you, that by making them, shikarees, or hunters of the large game of India’s magnificent forests, you are keeping them out of a thousand temptations and injurious pursuits, which they can scarcely avoid falling into, if from no other cause than ennui and thoughtlessness. Induce them, if possible, to become fond of field sports. This will keep them fit for their duty as soldiers, both in body and inclination.

“Depend upon it, that the deep-set eyes, thin nostril, and arched brow, are not to baulked of excitement. The possessors of these—I may say *gifts*—love and are formed for excitement. If not satiated in one way, and that an innocent, manly, and useful one, your boys may take to the gaming-table, or to an excess of feasting, rioting, or debauchery. Excitement they must have, or die. Let them, therefore, become bold riders, cunning hunters, riflemen of the woods. Inure them to toil while they are young, and a green old age shall reward *them* for their choice, and they shall be thankful to you for your encouragement and advice.

“The active form, the muscular arm, the sinewy hand, the foot whose arched instep betokens its spring and elasticity—beneath which, when naked on the ground, water will flow—were not given, combined with the above-named gifts, to waste their activity, strength and lightness, in frivolous pursuits or effeminate pleasures.

“I do not mean to uphold to scorn the quiet book-reading and studious character of a station; nor to state that there are

not many such worthy men in each and every cantonment ; but to inculcate the lesson that activity and employment are necessary to keep youth from vice—prone by nature as we all are to it, and more easily allured by its temptations than to good. I point out an amusement, and a useful pursuit, and a way of passing his leisure time, to the boy who, freed for the first time from the trammels of school, can rarely sit down and amuse himself with books, and, in consequence, is likely to fall into idleness—the root of all evil. To each one is his talent given by God to cultivate ; to the Preacher, in order to save the souls of the poor, unlettered, and ignorant heathen ; to him who has been blessed with the gifts of good nerve, energy and strength, that he may save the bodies of these same ignorant heathen from the fell destroyer that lives in the forest and preys upon them. Who shall say that the poor idolater saved by the latter from destruction shall not become converted to Christianity by the former ?”

Long after writing this paper I came on the following extract from the *Saturday Review*, which says more than I have ever heard before in praise of the finest of Indian Field Sports.

“ A well-known nobleman used to declare that no sport would be comparable to rat-hunting ‘ if you only ride to it,’ and few who have entered with real spirit into the fun of stopping, watching, smoking, flooding, and digging out the holes of these vermin will be inclined to dispute the justice of his lordship’s dictum. But then, unhappily, in addition to the fatal drawback of the hunter being on foot, the game must be admitted to be something more than ignoble ; there is no danger except that of rapping one’s toes, and although the excitement is intense, it has too much of the low comic in it to be stimulating in the proper way. None of these objections can be raised to the chase of the wild boar. The animal is as fleet as a racer, and as brave as a bull-dog, a rip from his ever-ready tusk makes as

ugly a wound as one would wish not to receive, and the man who slays him requires to be mounted on a really good specimen of the noblest breed of horses in the world. In this way it certainly combines within itself more of the elements of the right kind of excitement than any other sport we can think of. Fox-hunting, by an unseen sliding scale, adapts itself to every variety of weight and of constitution, and is followed at the same time with genuine pleasure by bold bulky men under whom the strongest Arabs would stagger, and with infinite self satisfaction by others, whose hearts are cased in something softer than the *robur et æs triplex* of the poet. But hog-hunting—or pig-sticking, as Indians love to call it—has no such accommodating attractions. A bold heart, a quick eye, a rapid judgment, a fine temper, a strong arm, a firm seat, a skilful hand, and a moderately light weight, must, each and all, be found in him who aspires to be even an outsider in this noble sport; and when it is considered that the first four of these qualities are precisely those which are best calculated to ensure popularity with one's equals and success in the battle of life, it is hardly to be wondered at that among its most ardent votaries have been found not a few of the eminent men whom the Indian services delight to call their own."

VAGRANT.

ARCHERY.

Accept, from VAGRANT, dear Editor, most hearty good wishes that all happiness may attend you and yours during the coming year. Enlighten me on the following matter, regarding the noble science of Archery, of which I know naught, although, when a member of the Madras Archery Club, I studied with care the rules thereof, from No. 1. which sets forth that every member shall be proposed by two ladies, to No. 17, which insisted that "the strictest silence should be observed during practice;" this being followed more in the breach than the observance, confused

me so much, that I have never been able to rise to a higher rank than that of an orderly employed to pick up arrows, or, at few and fortunate moments, to be entrusted to hold them for some fair shooter. One of my daughters, however, who takes a keen interest in Archery, having read the following article in your *Observer*, threatens to make my few remaining years a burden to me unless I can obtain answers to the following questions.

“Archery Meetings took place on Tuesday, the 13th and Tuesday, the 20th December. At the first of these meetings the two highest scores were made by “Mrs.—and Miss—the former obtained 114 points with 34 hits, and the “latter 110 points with 25 hits. On Tuesday last Mrs.—was again first, with “a score of 134 points obtained in 34 hits: Mr.—being second with 110 points “in 31 hits. The number of arrows shot at the weekly practices by each member “has been reduced from 96 to 72.”

How many Arrows did each Archer shoot each day? and at what distances? Do the Ootacamund Archers count “hits” and “score” together, or separately? If you can, gentle Editor, obtain this information, you will very much oblige VAGRANT.

One does not expect a staid “*Pater-familias*,” with heaps of grown-up daughters, to be aught save adamant; but there can be few more dangerous places for a susceptible man than an Archery meeting: no wonder Robin Hood succumbed without a struggle to Clorinda: see the following extract from the ballad of his marriage—

“As that word was spoken, Clorinda came by,
The queen of the shepherds was she;
Her kirtle was velvet, as green as the grass,
And her buskin did reach to her knee.

So modest her gait, her person divine,
And her countenance free from all pride!
In her hand was a bow, and a quiver of arrows
Hung gracefully by her fair side.

Said Robin Hood, “Lady fair, whither away?
Oh whither, fair lady, away?”
She smilingly answered, “To kill a fat buck,
For to-morrow is Tutbury day,”

And as we did wend all towards the green bower,
 Two hundred fair stags we espied;
 She chose out the fattest of all the brave herd,
 And shot him through side and side.
 "By the faith of my body," said bold Robin then,
 I never saw woman like thee;
 Or com'st thou from east, or com'st thou from west,
 Thou need'st not beg venison from me."
 BALLAD OF ROBIN HOOD'S MARRIAGE.

I am delighted to find that in the *Observer* of the 3rd, HAWKEYE has anticipated questions I intended to put regarding the climbing tiger. Could not Messrs. Nicholas and Curths, Mr. Boesinger, or some other photographer, give us a picture of the tree? I am sure that a sufficient number of copies of the print would be taken to make it pay.

Can HAWKEYE measure for me the height, or get me a picture of a tree we both know of, to which tigers often resort, natives say, for the purpose of sharpening their claws? I have lost the measurements taken when the tree was pointed out to me by a mutual friend.

I am sorry HAWKEYE has not had good luck with woodcock; this has been a good year for snipe at Kamptee. The other day I got 14 couple, a most unusual bag for these parts; six couple of these birds were "*Jacks*" the rest "*Common Snipe*." The "*pintailed*," which is the snipe of Mysore and Neilgherries, has not been found by me here. I got, the same day a bittern, which is a rare bird anywhere; the only other I have killed was in Bundelcund. Our hunt was out during Christmas week, and had good sport, getting twenty hog and one hyæna, without any of the harm done to the horses which attended our December meet last year.

HAWKEYE will be glad to know, that the good cause of preservation is gradually, but surely, progressing. Men are now becoming ashamed of slaughtering animals and birds during the breeding season, and, when they murder a hind or doe, conceal or apologize for the offence, instead of mentioning it with pride

as many did three years ago. Moreover, a powerful and able ally has joined our forces, and it is to be hoped, intends to lead many an attack on "*fleshers*," of all sorts and conditions.

VAGRANT.

[The total number of arrows shot by each lady on Tuesday, the 13th December, was 72, half that number (36) at 60 yards, the other half (36) at 50 yards; the same on Tuesday, the 20th. The gentlemen shoot the same number of arrows as the ladies: the difference is in distance; they shoot 36 arrows at 80 yards, while the ladies are shooting at 60, and 36 arrows at 60 yards, while the ladies shoot the same number at 50. Hits and scores are counted separately in the Neilgherry Archery Club. In many clubs the number of hits is added to the score; but not so here.—ED S. I. O.]

WILD ANIMALS AND BIRDS.*

Lieut.-Colonel McMaster of the Madras Army, has kindly supplied a few Notes on the birds observed by him in the Gawilgarh Hills, whose presence there is new and interesting to ornithologists. He writes (May 1870)—

The following memoranda are from observations taken in April and May 1870, a most unfavorable period, because during these months the grass and underwood are destroyed by fires, sometimes of considerable extent, which effectually drive most of the animals towards nearly inaccessible cliffs or deep gorges between the spurs of hills. However the natural history of Chikalda is peculiarly valuable, as in addition to many birds and beasts commonly found in the plains, some hitherto supposed to have been restricted to particular localities meet each other on the neutral ground of these hills. The names and numbers here given are taken from Jerdon's '*Birds and Mammals of India*.':—

*Extracted from Gazetteer for the Hyderabad Assigned Districts by A. C. Lyall, Esquire, B. C. S.

"No. 300, *Ochromela Nigrorufa*—The black and orange fly-catcher, has, I think, been seen by me among the cliffs a few miles west of the station. This is interesting, as Jerdon says that 'this remarkably plumaged fly-catcher, the coloration of which is quite unique, has hitherto only been found on the summit of the Neilgherries and highest mountains of Ceylon.'

No. 306, *Cyornis Tickelliae*—Tickell's blue red-breast. Jerdon says that this bird has only as yet been procured in Central India, and by Tickell. Mr. Blanford got one at Seoni, another near Chanda (Asiatic Society's Journal, vol. 38). He seems to think the sexes are alike in plumage; on this point I agree with Mr. Blanford. The sex of the specimen shot at Chikalda was not fixed, but the two birds seen appeared to be a pair, and were alike in plumage.

No. 342, *Myiophonus Horsfieldii*—The Malabar whistling thrush. Jerdon says that this fine thrush is found throughout all the forests of Southern and Western India, from near the top of the Neilgherries (6,000 feet) to almost the level of the sea * * * ; but it is not found in any of the forests of the Eastern Ghats, nor in *Central* or Northern India. It especially delights in mountain torrents; and if there is a waterfall it is sure to be found there. I got a pair of these very handsome birds, being first attracted by their fine clear notes, in a dry bed, which in the rains must become a torrent and waterfall a short distance beyond James' point, about three miles west of Chikalda. Others will probably be seen. The birds at this are wary, and difficult to watch.

No. 446, *Hypsipetes Ganeesa*—The Ghat black bulbul. Jerdon says that this species, has only yet been procured by Colonel Sykes, who says that it inhabits the Western Ghats. It is most probably found on the Mahableshwar Hills. On the 5th May I got it near Chikalda. Its habits are exactly those of No. 445, *Hypsipetes Neilgherriensis*, the Neilgherry black

bulbul (abundant near Ootacamund)—for it is a vivacious and quarrelsome bird, constantly on the move, and during its flight from one tree to another keeping up a lively warbling. The specimen obtained was, as in Jardine's illustration, more blackish-ashy than grey-brown, as described in Jerdon; space round and behind eye paler than rest of head; wing and tail same colour as body; bill orange; legs pale yellow; irides brownish. Blanford remarks that many of the Malabar birds extend northwards along the Western Ghats. Why should not some of them follow the course of these hills into Central India?*

Corvidæ.

No. 660, *Corvus Culminatus*—The Indian Corby,—was the only crow observed above these ghats. *C Splendens*, the familiar social pest of stations in the plains, does not seem to penetrate beyond the belt of low woodland at the foot of the hills. Both varieties abound at Bangalore, which is only 700 feet lower than Chikalda. *Calminatus* will probably not be found in any except the hill or well-wooded stations in Berar, while *Splendens* should abound everywhere except in or round the base of the mountains. The first is the crow of the Neilgherries, replacing his grey cousin at Kullar, the posting-stage at the foot of Kùnùr† Ghat.‡

Nos. 772, *Crocopus Phænicopterus*; 773, *Crocopus Chlorigaster*, Bengal, and Southern green pigeons.

Blanford says (Asiatic Society's Journal No. 155) that birds shot at Nagpur were perfectly intermediate between these two races, and agrees with Jerdon in considering that when the two differ so little as in the green pigeons, the rollers, and Kalij

* Since writing this I have procured several of the Southern India and Malabar birds near Chikalda among others "No. 473, *ORIOLUS CEYLONENSIS*, the southern black-headed oriole;" Blanford mentions that it has been found at Nasik and Ahmadnagar-

† Coonoor of Madrasses.

‡ Since this was sent to press "*CORVUS SPLENDENS*" has been killed (2nd June) at Chikalda. It may come up here during the rains, or, as was probably the case in this instance, some stragglers have followed a camp.

pheasants, they breed together freely. Green pigeons are now (April and May) breeding at Chikalda. The nest is apparently very carelessly constructed of a few dead twigs placed haphazard at the end of a branch, but from this cause it is exceedingly well concealed, as the bough selected always appears to be a bare one, on which the dry twigs do not attract attention. Both varieties of these pigeons, and their intermediate hybrids, will probably be found on these hills.

No. 813, *Gallus Sonneratii*—The grey jungle fowl. It may not perhaps be generally known that this, the finest of the jungle fowls, is to be found as far north and east as *Chikalda*, having doubtless made its way from Malabar and Canara along the Western Ghats, and thence perhaps across the Berar valley from the Chandor and Ajanta ranges. Chikalda must be very nearly its north-east limit, for close to this it is replaced by *Gallus Ferrugineus*, the well known red jungle fowl of Northern and Eastern India, and, with a very slight difference, of Burmah. Jerdon gives the following as the limits of the two races:—

“ Grey jungle fowl—This handsome jungle fowl is found in Southern India only, extending on east coast the to a little north of the Godavari in Central India, to the Pachmari or Mahadeva hills north of Nagpur, and on the west coast to the Raj Pipla hills, where it meets the red jungle fowl. Its occurrence on the Pachmari hills is most probably its eastern extension from the Western Ghats and the Raj Pipla hills, and it will probably be found along the Satpura range.”

Of Gallus Ferrugineus—the red jungle fowl, he says: „This well known jungle fowl is found from the Himalayas southwards, on the west of India, as far at all events as the range of Vindhia hills; and, as I have been informed by Mr. W. Blanford since the above were penned, also south of the Narbada on the Raj Pipla hills.” The two races are so close to

each other that there may be a little confusion in Central India about them—*Gallus Sonneratii* is the bird of Chikalda.”

The deer in Berar are —

- (1) Sambar (*Rusa Aristotelis*).
- (2) Spotted deer (*Axis Maculatus*).
- (3) Barking deer (*Cervulus Aureus*).

Of antelope we have—

- (1) Common antelope (*Bezoartica*).
- (2) Nilgai (*Portax Pictus*).
- (3) Four-horned antelope (*Tetraceros Quadricornis*)
and Elliot's variety.

Chikara (*Gazella Bennettii*).

As with the birds just mentioned, some of the mammals hitherto said to be confined to peculiar localities are probably to be found among the Central India hills. The only illustration of this sort that can be now offered is with No. 129, *Herpestes Monticolus*, the long-tailed mungoos, which I obtained between the hill-fort of *Gawilgarh* and Chikalda; but which Jerdon (*vide* page 135, *Mammals*,) only procured from the Eastern Ghats inland from Nellore, where it inhabits forests among the hills.

There are a few local theories regarding the following animals in Berar which appear to be incorrect:—

No. 137, *Kuon Rutilans*—Wild dog. Jerdon and Blyth agree in considering that there is only one race of wild dog in India and Malayna.

I think that the differences in size and length of hair observed by some sportsmen are merely caused by season, and by the brushwood the animals have to work through,—in fact, only the effects of hot or cold weather, deep well-shaded forest, or underwood full of thorns, burrs, or rough prickly grass.

No. 220, *Rusa Aristotelis*—The Sambar. Some sportsmen assert that two species of sambar are to be found in these hills, but as Jerdon and Blyth agree in considering that the sambar or jerow of the Himalayas and of Central and Southern India is identical with the deer found in Ceylon, Assam, Burmah, the Malayan Peninsula, and some of the islands, it is difficult to believe that there are two varieties of this *Rusa* to be found here. It is however possible that *Rucervus Duvaucellii* (No. 219), the swamp deer, or barasinga of sportsmen, may have been confounded with the sambar. The swamp deer is said by Jerdon to extend sparingly through the great forest tract of Central India, to be rare to the south of the Narbada, but to have been killed between that river and Nagpur, not far from Seoni. It is tolerably abundant in the open forest-land between Mandla and Amarkantak, at the source of the Narbada. He gives as the Central Indian name of this deer *Goen* or *Goenjah* the male, *Gaoni* the female, and calls the sambar the *Ma-ao* of the Gonds.

Europeans and natives are often in the habit of setting down any large female deer as a sambar, and of disposing of a small red one as a jungle sheep. Nilgai have been pointed out to me as sambar by a villager in the Dakhan.

Similar mistakes are often made in Burmah between the common sambar and the brow-antlered *Rusa*, *Cervus Frontalis*.

Beside the muntjak (No. 223), *Cervulus Aureus*, rib-faced or barking deer, sportsmen speak of two small red antelope, which many of them term bakra or bekri. One of these they say has four and the other only two horns. It is more than probable that these animals are identical. Jerdon says that No. 227, *Tetraceros Quadricornis*, the four-horned antelope, has rarely in the south of India more than a knob or corneous tip, which often falls off, leaving a black callous skin. He was at one time inclined to consider Mr. Elliot's species distinct from

the northern animal, but in deference to Mr. Blyth's matured opinion, he has united them.

Mr. Elliot's description of his antelope is at page 225, vol. x, of the Madras Journal. As the animal appears to lose its anterior or spurious horns as it goes south, there is every likelihood that this change commences just about this part of Central India. Whence I infer that both varieties of the same species may be found together in these jungles, differing only in the number of horns.

The bison of Melghat is No. 238, *Gavæus (Bos) Gaurus*, the gaur. All the skulls of bison seen by me at Chikalda have the large semi-cylindric crests rising above the base of the horns, by which the gaur is plainly distinguishable from other wild cattle."

. CENTRAL INDIAN BIRDS.*

Notes on Birds observed in the neighbourhood of Nagpore and Kamptee, (Central Provinces,) Chikalda and Akola in Berar, by Lieut.-Colonel A. C. McMaster, Madras Staff Corps.

[24th February 1871.]

These rough notes were taken during hunting and shooting trips from Kamptee. The natural history is interesting, as, in addition to many birds and beasts commonly found in the plains some hitherto supposed to have been restricted to particular localities meet each other on the neutral ground of these hills.

The names and numbers here given are taken from Jerdon's "Birds of India."

No. 6, *Neophron Percnopterus*—White Scavenger Vulture. I found this bird breeding near Kamptee in January.

No. 29, *Aquila Fulvescens*—Tawny Eagle. Kamptee.

No. 38, *Circaetus Gallicus*—Common serpent Eagle. I saw one of these fine birds attempt to carry off a cobra in the public gardens at Chikalda; my approach drove the eagle away from the reptile, which however, it had crippled completely.

No. 56, *Milvus Govinda*—Common Kite. Jerdon says, that the kite "breeds from January to April, beginning to couple about Christmas." I have seen them building at Kamptee in November, December and January.

No. 65, *Syrnium Sinense*—Mottled wood Owl. I got a pair of these beautiful owls and a fully fledged young one at Gogee in Wurda district, on the 10th of March; they must therefore like most other birds of prey, pair early in the cold season.

No. 82, *Hirundo Rustica*—Common English Swallow. Kamptee and Nagpore.

No. 84, *Hirundo Filifera**Wire tailed Swallow. I found these birds in small companies at Chandkee, Khopra and Gogee in the Wurda district in December and February, and in January, a pair with a nest, open at the top, on a rock overhanging the river at Mahadulla, 16 miles from Kamptee.

No. 90, *Cotyle Concolor*—Dusky crag Martin. Some birds were obtained by me at Chikalda, 3700 feet, in May.

No. 98, *Cypselus Melba*—Alpine Swift. I saw several very fine swifts, which seemed to be this species, at the old fort of Gawilgarh and at Chikalda, 3700 feet, in April and May, but could not get a specimen. They appeared to be breeding about the perpendicular cliffs on which Gawilgarh is perched.

No. 100, *Cypselus Affinis*—Common Indian Swift. Abounds at Kamptee, but the birds burrowed so deeply into the thatched

*A large colony of, I think, *HIRUNDO FLUVICOLA*—Indian Cliff Swallow were breeding on a rock, or broken bridge (I forget which) overhanging the river at Akola in West Berar, during the last week in December.

roofs that I could never get a nest. The burrows were very neatly made and perfectly round.

No. 117, *Merops Viridis*—Common Indian Bee Eater. I have found *torquatus* at Chandkee Khopra in Wurda in December, and *ferrugiceps* at the same place and time. Are not both of these accidental varieties of *M. Viridis*? I also found *torquatus* at Chikalda in May; is the peculiar coloration of the throat the breeding dress of the female?

No. 118, *Merops Philippensis*—Blue tailed Bee Eater. Abundant about Kamptee during the hot weather and rains (breeding season?) I think they breed here, but have not been able to get their nests, although, if these are to be found, they should be in the banks of the river, where it runs past the Military Cantonment.

No. 127, *Halcyon Leucocephalus*—Brown headed King fisher. Chandkee Khopra, Wurda district in December.

No. 129, *Halcyon Fuscus*—White breasted King-fisher. Abundant throughout the district.

No. 144, *Meniceros Bicornis*—Common grey Hornbill. Not rare about Chandkee Khopra in Wurda.

No. 147, *Palæornis Alexandri*—Alexandrine Parrakeet. One I killed near Kamptee was considerably larger than the size given by Jerdon. They appear to be more abundant in the cold season than at other times.

No. 164, *Yungipicus Hardwickii*—Southern pigmy Woodpecker. I got one at Chikalda, 3700 feet.

No. 181, *Brachypternus Chrysonotus*—Lesser golden backed Woodpecker.—Chikalda.

No. 188, *Yunx Torquilla*—Wry neck. Chikalda in April.

No. 193, *Megalaima Caniceps*—Common Green Barbet. There are scores of these birds about Chikalda and the hill fort of Gawilgarh. I have heard them calling at all hours during

the night, even when there was no moon. Those I have killed generally had the bristles about their bills covered with gummy matter, evidently from some fruit.

No. 197, *Xantholæma Indica*—Crimson breasted Barbet or Coppermith. At Kamptee I saw one of these birds sitting on the ground beside a small water-course in my garden, it probably came down to drink; except on this occasion I have never seen a barbet on the ground. A pair bred in my garden at Bellary in the cross beam of a vinery, and at Bombay I found a nest in the dead branch of a tree close to the house. The entrance was so small, that it was difficult to believe that the bird could get through it; it was perfectly circular and as well bored as if it had been cut with an augur; the hole was not more than 18 inches in depth, but the little carpenter was busily employed in enlarging it by cutting out very small chips and throwing them about the spot; as far as could be judged from probing, the inside appeared beautifully smooth.*

No. 199, *Cuculus Canorus*—English Cuckoo. This bird is very abundant at Russellcondah in Goomsoor during the rains, coming into the gardens and close to the houses. I have seen and heard it in the Golconda zemindary and at Goodum, in April, at Saugor in June, and within three miles of Kamptee on the 15th June; a friend heard it at Chikalda on the 5th of June.

No. 212, *Coccytes Melanoleucos*—Pied crested Cuckoo. I killed one at Kamptee on the 4th of July.†

No. 220, *Taccocua Sirkee*—Bengal Sirkeer. I got one at Chikalda, but my bird had the brown above 'washed with green' as in No. 221 of Jerdon. Could it have been that variety? or was it No. 222?

No. 234, *Arachnechthra Asiatica*—Purple Honey Sucker. I can confirm Mr. Blanford and Dr. Jerdon's statements that the female retains her dull colours in the breeding season.

*Once acquainted with these nests it is very easy to find one. The bird appears to use it as a dwelling as well as nursery, and to inhabit it throughout the year.

†Abundant in Secunderabad.

No. 255, *Upupa Nigripennis*—Hoopoe. Abundant at Chikalda in May, but appears to leave the plains during the hot season and rains; the first I saw at Kamptee in autumn was on the 14th of October. At Madras I found (February 24th) a hoopoe's nest in a hole in a tree close to the club, there were two fully fledged young birds in the nest, about which there was not the faintest trace of evil stench (*vide* page 391 of Jerdon).

No. 257, *Lanius Erythronotus*—Rufus backed Shrike. I have found this bird at Kamptee, and agree with Blanford, that it varies greatly in size and somewhat in plumage within the same district.

No. 278, *Dicrurus Macrocerus*—Common King Crow or Drongo Shrike. Jerdon says that he has never seen the king crow fix on the back of a hawk with claws and beak. At Rangoon I saw one thus fix itself on a cattle egret feeding on the ground, hit the latter hard on the head with its beak and repeat the assault several times, the reason apparently being that the other bird had secured some insect on which the king crow had set his heart. At Kamptee I saw one fix on the back of an owlet (*Athene Brama*), and maintain its hold while the latter was flying for several yards; and on another occasion I saw a king crow pursue the common bee-eater until the latter dropped an insect which was seized by the Drongo before it reached the ground.

No. 293, *Tchitrea Paradisi*—Paradise Fly Catcher. This beautiful bird is not rare in the Nagpore country, I have seen it close to Chikalda, 3,700 feet. Jerdon says he has not seen it higher than about 2000

No. 288, *Leucocerca Pectoralis*—White spotted Fantail. Jerdon says that he has only found this bird on the Neilgherries at an elevation of 6000 feet. Mr. Blanford got it near Chanda in forests, his specimens were dusky on the back and rather rufous on the abdomen. I got it at Chikalda in May, colours as described by Jerdon.

No. 300, *Ochromela Nigrorufa*—Black and Orange Fly Catcher. This has I think been seen by me among the cliffs a few miles west of Chikalda.

No. 305, *Cyornis Banyumas*—Horsefield's blue red breast. I got two or three specimens of this fly-catcher at Chikalda in May.

No. 306, *Cyornis Tickellæ*—Tickell's blue red breast. (*vide* Berar Gazetteer, page 57.)

No. 342, *Myiophonus Horsfieldii*—Malabar Whistling Thrush. (*vide* Berar Gazetteer, page 57.)

No. 345, *Pitta Bengalensis*—Yellow breasted ground Thrush I killed one in my garden at Kamptee on the 2nd of October; I have known three cases of these birds taking refuge in houses as described at page 504 of Jerdon's work.

No. 351, *Petrocossyphus Cyaneus*—Rock Thrush.* One of these silent and solitary birds may be seen in almost every village in the Wurda district in December. Both of the houses I occupied at Kamptee had one which sheltered itself under the eaves during the cold season. In Burma, this is the tamest and most confiding bird I have ever seen: it not only frequently enters the verandahs, but the inner rooms of houses, and is almost startling in its noiseless and uncanny familiarity. Whilst at Tonghoo, I had, every season, one or two of them about my house, so fearless, that they might almost have been handled. I saw one, in my verandah at Rangoon, kill and swallow a large scorpion.

*I have only once seen this solitary bird in company. A pair, male and female, were, at Bellary on the 21st November, pursuing each other amongst some rocks, but whether in anger or sport, love or war did not appear: probably the first however, the rightful owner of the property ejecting a trespasser.

There certainly is something very unearthly about these interesting birds: I agree with Jerdon as to time, place and sweetness of song which I have however, once at Bellary, heard in the MORNING, as well as during the heat of the day as he mentions, and of ALL mornings, during the darkest moments of the total eclipse of the sun on the 12th December 1871! Again at Secunderabad a rock thrush lived close to the Military Prison and delighted in watching the Prisoners at hard labour, digging gravel, &c., the reason was obvious he was waiting for them to leave off work, to pick up any insects they might have disturbed, but it always added to my ideas regarding the elfin habits of the bird. As Jerdon says they are only winter visitors arriving in October. I have seen my prison haunting acquaintance at Secunderabad on the 20th April in 72 and 74, the first an unusually hot as the second was a mild season.

No. 359, *Merula Nigropileus*—Black capped Blackbird. Chikalda, April and May.

No. 446, *Hypsipetes Ganeesa*—Neilgherry black Bulbul. At page 58 of the Berar Gazetteer, I mentioned that I had got this bird at Chikalda and remarked that its habits were exactly those of No. 446, *H. Neilgherriensis*,—I have since found in Appendix, page 872, vol. 3 of Jerdon, that the birds are identical.

No. 460, *Otocompsa Jocosa*—Red whiskered Bulbul. I shot this bird at Chikalda in May: Jerdon says it is rare in the Central table land, Blanford never saw it in Central India, it has probably followed the chain of Western Ghats northward from the Neilgherries where it is very abundant.*

No. 464, *Phyllornis Mallabarica*—Malabar green Bulbul. Chikalda in June.

No. 470, *Oriolus Kundoo*—Golden Oriole. I found several nests of this bird at Kamptee during June and July; they corresponded exactly with Jerdon's admirable description, at page 108, vol. ii. Has any writer mentioned that this bird has a faint, but very sweet and plaintive song which he continues for a considerable time? I have only heard it when a family old and young, were together, *i. e.* at the close of the breeding season.

No. 473, *Oriolus Ceylonensis*—Southern black headed Oriole. I got either this bird, or No. 472, at Chikalda, and agree with Mr. A. Hume, who (J. A. S. B. 1870, p. 118) utterly disbelieves in "*Ceylonensis*" as a distinct species.

No. 480, *Thamnobia Cambaiensis*—Brown backed Indian Robin. Three pairs of these birds built about the roof of my

* In reference to this Mr. W. Blanford, has kindly written to me: "Your *Otocompsa jocosa* is probably *O. fusicandata*, (BLYTH) distinguished by the want of white spots on the tail. *Megalaima caniceps* is more probably *M. inornata* (WALDEN) if the species is good". I doubtless am mistaken about the bul-bul which, taking as an old acquaintance. I do not remember examining with much care: the barbets certainly appeared to agree with Jerdon's *M. caniceps*; I have never seen a description of *M. inornata*.

house at Kamptee. One nest was composed of coir matting stolen from me and lined with the red wool which had dropped from an old carpet daily beaten near the spot; there were no snake skins in the nest (vide Jerdon), but in it were two or three pieces of the brilliant mica, so abundant at Kamptee, and these very much resembled scales from snake skins.

No. 497, *Ruticilla Rufiventris*—Indian red-start. I first remarked this bird at Kamptee on the 1st of October and there were a good number here on the 3rd March.* Does it change its colour in summer? The rufous tints struck me as becoming paler and more yellowish in February and March, I was told of a mistake about the nest of this bird, similar to that mentioned at page 138, vol. ii., of Jerdon.

No. 556, *Phylloscopus Magnirostris*—Large billed tree Warbler. I think I got this bird at Chikalda in May.

No. 569, *Culicpeta Burkii*—Black browed Warbler. A pair of these pretty little birds was obtained at Kamptee in February, and others were not uncommon in May at Chikalda, where they probably breed.

No. 604, *Agrodroma Sordida*—Brown rock Pipet. I found the nest of this bird near Kamptee in April in a hole in black cotton soil, there were three or perhaps four young in the nest.

No. 645, *Parus Cinerus*—Indian grey Tit. I think I saw this bird on the Ghat between Ellichpoor and Chikalda, at an elevation of nearly 3000 feet.

No. 648, *Machlolophus Jerdoni*—Southern Yellow Tit. Chikalda in April and May.

No. 660, *Corvus Culminatus*—Indian Corby, and

No. 663, *Corvus Splendens*—Common grey Crow. The local distribution of these puzzles me sadly. Both abound at Bangalore and Madras, while *culminatus* is the only crow of the

* I saw it near the Military Prison Secunderabad on the 10th April.

Neilgherries, replacing his grey cousin at Kullar, the posting stage at the foot of the Kúnúr Ghat to which place and no further *splendens* had penetrated in 1870. I could not find *culminatus* at Waltair, and during two years at Kamptee have never seen it in that station, but have occasionally found it at some of our hog-hunting meets in the Wurda district and at Akola. It was moreover the only crow on the Chikalda hills during April and May : with the first rains, however, in June, *splendens* appeared there ; (Berar Gazetteer, page 58).

Is *culminatus* to be found at Bombay ?

Common and familiar as crows are—living almost as much *in* houses as *near* them—the act of coition has never—so say the natives of Burma and, I believe, of many parts of India—been observed ; and certainly, for more than twenty years since first hearing the statement, I have carefully watched for an opportunity of refuting it without success. Just at dawn, I think, I have twice observed crows thus engaged and on the nests : but I am not certain, and I have never met any one who could own to having seen even as much. I have not a copy of the book, so quote from memory, but in the “Laws of Menu,” (the origin of Bhudist and Hindu notions) it is set forth that “a good wife should be like a crow” *i. e.* that she should not allow any conjugal endearments or familiarities before spectators.

The Burmese representatives of *splendens* are much darker than those in India, but an excellent naturalist remarks that such is the case with the Burmese varieties of many birds found in both countries ; for instance, I can think of the Burmese Paradise Fly-catcher (*Tchitrea affinis*) ; the Burmese Roller (*Coracias affinis*) ; the Burmese Pea-fowl (*Pavo muticus*) ; and the Burmese variety of the Jungle Fowl (*Gallus ferrugineus*).

Wide awake as the crow is during the day, it is, when once gone to roost, a most stupid and difficult bird to rouse. I

have almost pushed them one by one from their perches, in low trees, very shortly after sunset.

It is interesting to watch these birds at Rangoon when a storm is coming on. Up to the last moment they appear to be intent on foraging; then, just before the storm bursts, the air is alive with hundreds of them flying in all directions, but each one going direct as a bullet to his own tree or clump of bamboos. I have often timed my taking shelter from a shower coming on by watching their movements.

No. 678, *Dendrocitta Leucogastra*—Long tailed Magpie. Jerdon says that this bird has only been found in some of the jungles of the Malabar Coast. I got it at Chikalda in May.

No. 724, *Melophus Melanicterus*—Crested black Bunting. I got this bird in May at Chikalda in Berar. and as I have seen it in pairs, fancy that it breeds there; it is a shy bird, always on the move about the edges of cliffs and ravine, and therefore difficult to watch.

Nos. 772, *Crocopus Phœnicoplerus* and 773. *Crocopus Chlorigaster*—Green Pigeons. (*vide* Berar Gazetteer, page 58)

No. 800, *Pterocles Fasciatus*—Painted sand Grouse or rock Pigeon. I never remarked the crepuscular habits of this bird until last August when at Akola, where just after dark on two occasions a small flock passed close over me. I pointed them out to a friend who has since observed the habit.

No. 802, *Pterocles Exustus*—Common sand Grouse or pin-tailed rock Pigeon. I got the eggs of this bird, three in number on the 12th of March, at Larkee in the Chanda district.

No. 813, *Gallus Sonneratii*—Grey Jungle Fowl and

No. 814, *Galloperdix Spadiceus*—Red spur Fowl. Abound near Chikalda.

No. 839, *Sypheotides Auritus*—Floriken. I saw a male of this bird in full breeding plumage at Akola in August, and on

the 28th of October, near Nagpore, killed a cock just losing his ear tufts and very black. At Secunderabad on the 6th June a male in partial breeding plumage was brought to me, the ear tufts were well developed, but the bird was only commencing to assume his black feathers. This should fix the breeding season of these birds in the Central Provinces and Berar between July and November.

No. 845, *Charadrius Longipes*—Golden Plover. Do these birds visit the Central Provinces? I have never found one there.

No. 856, *Sarciophorus Bilobus*—Yellow wattled Lapwing. I got this Lapwing at Chikalda. It is far more silent than its relations, and runs with its back hunched and in a more game like manner.

No. 864, *Grus Leucogeranus*—Large white Crane. This fine bird comes as far south as Kamptee. On the 3rd of February, I killed one at Koohee, about 20 miles S. E. of the Cantonment.

No. 871, *Gallinago Scolopacinus*—Common Snipe. Is the snipe of the Nagpore country. At Bangalore and on the Neilgherries, all the snipes I have killed were pintails, No. 870. At Madras in December, out of a bag of 38 couples both varieties were in nearly equal proportion.*

Nos. 872 and 873. The Jack and Painted Snipe are occasionally to be killed near Kamptee.

No. 936, *Botaurus Stellaris*—Bittern. I got one of these rare birds near Kamptee on the 9th December, and another some years ago, on the 3rd January, two or three marches to the north of Saugor. One was said to have killed near Bangalore in April 1867.†

* At Secunderabad about five, and at Bellary fifteen or perhaps twenty per cent were pin-tails.

† I killed one at Gooty (Ceded Districts) on 30th November. A friend sent me another shot near Secunderabad in January and Mr. Mitchell told me that they have been purchased in the Madras market for the Museum.

No. 949, *Anser Indicus*—Barred headed Goose. I saw a large flock of these birds circling low over my house in the Kamptee Cantonment in February, and on the 23rd of the same month a very fine specimen was brought to me.

No. 967, *Branta Rufina* —Red crested Pochard. A couple of these fine ducks were brought to me at Kamptee on the 14th January.

No. 971, *Fuligula Cristata*—Tufted Duck. Several of these birds were brought into Kamptee by shikarees in April.

Note on Colonel McMaster's list of Birds from Nagpore, &c. by W. T. Blanford.

The occurrence of several Malabar birds at Chikalda in the Gawilgarh hills is a very interesting circumstance, as it adds an instance to those already known in which animals with decidedly Malay affinities are met with on isolated hills in India, while they are wanting in the surrounding lowlands. Whether the cause of this circumstance be climatic, and due to the greater dampness of these hill tops, I cannot say, probably it may be; but it is also probable that the animals, thus found isolated, once inhabited the plains of India, and were driven by a change in the climate (which may have been in its turn caused partly by the destruction of the forests), to take refuge on the hills, their place in the lowlands being supplied, in part at least, by the numerous desert types which are spread over the Indian plains, such amongst the birds as *Neophron*, *Aquila fulvescens*, *Pterocles exustus*, *Ammomanes phoenicurus* and *Pyrhulanda grisea*. That the hill birds have not migrated from other regions, but have really occupied the intervening country at one time, is rendered probable by the circumstance that animals

incapable of traversing long distances, such as ground snakes (*Uropletidæ*), and land shells, have the same peculiar distribution, and the same is the case, to some extent at least, with plants.

The Malabar forms mentioned in Col. McMaster's notes as found at Chikalda are *Brachypternus chrysonotus*, *Ochromela nigrorufa*, *Myiophonus Horsfieldii*, *Hypsipetes Ganeesa*, *Phylornis Malabarica*, and *Dendrocitta leucogastra*. *Otocompsa jocosa* (? *O. fuscicaudata*) and *Merula nigropileus* too, are not so far as I am aware, found in the plains of Berar and the Central Provinces.

It is very desirable to learn to what extent any of these Malabar forms occur at Pachmari and on Mount Abu. A Malabar fauna has been found on several hills in Southern India. My brother and I ten years ago* called attention to the occurrence of land shells of Nilgiri species on the Shevroy, Kolamully, Patchamully and Kalryenmully hills, and on one or minor peaks. Recently Major Beddome has found that both land shells and reptiles with unmistakable Malabar affinities on the Golconda hills near Vizagapatam and Mahendragiri hill near Ganjam. On a former occasion, J. A. S. B., 1867, p. 199, I called attention to the peculiar isolation of *Rucervus Duvauccelli*, (the Barasingha deer,) *Gallus ferrugineus* and the Saltree (*Shorea Robusta*) just below Pachmarhi in the Denwa valley, but this is a case of an outlier of the Bengal fauna, not of that inhabiting Malabar. Mr. Hume (Scrap Book I, p. 297,) records the occurrence of *Spizaëtus Nipalensis* on the Pachmari hills, and (J. A. S. B., 1870, p. 117,) of *Otocompsa fuscicaudata* on Mount Abu, and I have little doubt but that other Himalayan or Malabar forms accompany them.

*J. A. S. B.,

INDIAN AND BURMAN ORNITHOLOGY.

Random notes on Indian and Burman Ornithology. The numbers are Jerdon's.

1, *Vultur Monachus*—Great Brown Vulture. At Shuay-gheen in Burmah, the finest vulture I ever killed was, I think of this species, he was thickly covered with downy feathers, and seemed quite exhausted. He had probably been blown from the northward by a storm.

6, *Neophron Percnopterus*—White Scavenger Vulture. Once, while bear-shooting, I saw a Rock-owl (*Urrua Bengalensis*) which I had just put up, knocked over into a prickly pear bush by one of these foul birds, but although, the owl remained for many minutes lying on its back, and unable to move, no attempt at further molestation was made by its aggressor. I could easily have got the owl had I been so inclined, for it lay within a few feet of my post.

8, *Falco Peregrinus*—Peregrine Falcon. I have often seen them pursue and kill ducks and teal, but never snipe, as Jerdon mentions in *Birds of India*, vol. 1.

16, *Hypotriorchis Chicquera*—Red-headed Merlin. They often hunt in couples and in pursuit one flies just above and the other behind the quarry, so that it has hardly a chance of escape. I have seen them thus hawk at the King-fisher (*Alcedo Bengalensis*) about the fastest bird we know of, and have frequently known them to be puzzled by the extraordinary evolutions of the Indian Jay or Roller (*Coracias Indica*), as described by Jerdon 'Birds of India' vol. 1, p. 37.

33, *Nisaetus Bonelli*—Crestless Hawk Eagle. I have seen one carry off a full sized Pintailed Duck (*Dafila Acuta*) with the greatest ease.

35, *Limnaetus Cristatellus*—Crested Hawk Eagle. I killed several specimens, both old and young, answering to Jerdon's

description of this bird, whilst in Burmah; and had a splendid living example of the female for some time at Tonghoo. She was fed on dead or wounded crows, and was, at last, poisoned by a stupid servant, who gave her a chicken that had died of disease. I have often seen birds like her chase, and once kill jungle-fowl.

39, *Spilornis Cheela*—Crested Serpent Eagle. I can, from personal observation, corroborate Mr. Blyth's statement, quoted in Jerdon's 'Birds of India' Vol. 1 P. 79, that this species clutches frogs out of shallow tanks, in consequence of which habit, its toes are very often covered with mud.

41, *Poliocætus Ichthyætus*—White tailed Sea-Eagle. I think I have killed it on the Chilka Lake.

42, *Haliætus Fulviventer*—Ring-tailed Sea-Eagle. I have found it breeding on the rocky islands in the Chilka Lake in Orissa.

43, *Haliætus Leucogaster*—Grey-backed Sea-Eagle, At Tonghoo, in Burmah, I killed a female of this species—(which measured more than five feet from wing to wing) after she had, for a time, been struggling with and landing a fine Murrel above two feet in length. I saw part of the fight, but did not, at first, understand what it was. M——kept one of these noble birds alive at Rangoon, in 1865, for several weeks.

51, *Circus Swainsonii*—Pale Harrier. This bird is often taken for a fox by 'griffins,' when out with grey-hounds. I have seen one chase a floriken (*Sypheotides Auritus*) and have frequently known them pick up a quail.

53, *Circus Melanoleucos*—Pied Harrier. I have never seen it in India, but it is very common at Tonghoo, in upper Burmah, especially during the dry weather.

55, *Haliastur Indus* or *Brahminy*—Maroon-backed kite. I have known it carry off young chickens and any day in Madras it may be seen catching fish thrown up to it by pious Hindoos. I have

often been robbed of snipe and quail as Jerdon writes. I saw a bird (apparently the dwarf-Eagle, No. 32 of Jerdon, but it may have been a young one of this species) stoop twice at, and the second time carry off, a fish from the pond at, the deer paddock in the People's Park at Madras. In his efforts to elude a mob of kites and crows that forthwith gave chase, the bird dropped the fish which was carried off by a gardener before I thought of examining it, it must however have been at least half a pound in weight.

56, *Milvus Govinda*—Common Pariah Kite. I remember having seen one swoop down upon a dish in the middle of a large dinner party, seated outside a dawk bungalow, and take off a chop in its claws. They breed in September at Bellary, in November and December at Kamptee, I have counted 78 together at sunset, on a small tree near my house at Bellary, this was during the breeding season there (October) when one would fancy they should be in pairs. Rough looking though the nest may be it appears to require a long time and much care in the selection or rejection of sticks, like many other birds they do the difficult work together, one in, the other outside, and occasionally one, on making a mistake, gets a sharp tap on the head from the partner. Were these an old widow teaching a fresh spouse or a young couple imparting their crude sentiments on setting up house, to each other?

They swarm in Burmah during the dry season, but leave at the first sign of the rains; and about the surest evidence of the close of the monsoon is the return of these birds and of the Hoopoes.

58, *Baza Lophotes*—Crested black Kite. I have killed it in Goomsoor.

65, *Syrnium Sinense*—Mottled wood Owl. I once succeeded in capturing a beautiful specimen of this bird unhurt, when it was being bullied by crows, and kept it for a long time feeding it on Bloodsuckers (*Calotes Versicolor*). I do not re-

member having heard its hoot. I subsequently possessed another splendid living example of this species, but my servants allowed it to escape, as they declared it would bring death into the house.

69, *Urrua Bengalensis*—Rock horned Owl. I have often ridden these birds down, on a very ordinary horse, and taken them alive, or killed them with a stick. This feat may appear very extraordinary to any one who has only observed them among the rocky hills they generally frequent, but most riding men will recollect having flushed them from ravines and old quarries, in the open ground, while looking for a fox or jackal. On these occasions, let the bird be watched for his flight of about half a mile to some similar resting-place, then put up and followed, slowly at starting, but with increased pace as he tires for three or four flights more, when the poor wretch will become so confused and exhausted that he will fall an easy prey to hand or riding-whip.

Let the captor, however, beware of beak and talon, for both are freely brought into play by the quarry, who, as he stands at bay with glaring eye, erect plumage, and extended wing, menacing his assailant, is an object startling to the nerves of any horse not accustomed, as are most Eastern hunters, to close with wild animals.

The chase is often shortened by crows, mynas, and other birds joining in it, and combining to mob and confuse the owl.

81, *Ninox Scutellatus*—Brown Hawk Owl. Jerdon, in his Birds of India, vol. 1, p. 147, says that he has seen this bird though nocturnal in its habits, come forth before dark and seat itself on the top of a small tree, whence it would make an upward soar in an oblique direction with a continued flapping of its wings, and then descend with outspread wings to the same perch. I also have observed this custom: the bird was I think feeding on white ants on the wing. If this species settles on a house during the day, it is supposed by Musselmen to foretell marriage, but if during the night, death.

109, *Caprimulgus Albonotatus*—Large Bengal Night-Jar. Found in Burmah.

124, *Coracias Affinis*—Burmese Roller. Jerdon remarks (Birds of India, vol 1, p. 218) that this species is decidedly more wary and less familiar than *Coracias Indica*, and so it is, wherever the Chinamen have a chance of getting them shot, to export their wings for fans, but in the Military Cantonment of Rangoon, they are amongst the tamest and most familiar birds we have, and are constantly in the porch of my verandah.

132, *Todiramphus Collaris*—White Collared Kingfisher. At the Chinese Joss-house in Rangoon I have seen several hundreds of the skins of this species being prepared for exportation. It is said the Chinese pay as much as eight annas a bird for them, and the same for each skin of the Burmese Roller (*C. Affinis*),

140, *Homrains Bicornis*—Great Hornbill. From March to May these birds are continually passing over Tonghoo in Burmah, in small parties of five or six together, on their way to and from the rice-fields west of the old fort. They then feed on the ground more in the manner of crows than hornbills and may be shot by anyone who will wait for them morning and evening.* They are common in Goomsoor.

153, *Loriculus Vernalis*—Indian Lorikeet. They are to be caught in scores at Shuaygheen, (in Burma about the end of the cold season; and I have seen them eating, to all appearance perfectly contented within a few minutes after they had been taken. The process of securing them is very simple a small cage containing a single bird is hoisted upon a tall bamboo, with two or three limed sticks set above it, and the captive calls the wild ones as they pass by. I have often seen Burman boys catch four or five in almost as many minutes.

* I saw these birds day after day in the hot season of 1858, flying to and from the feeding-ground alluded to, at Tonghoo.

171, *Gecinus Striolatus*—Small Green Woodpecker. Found in Burma.

174, *Chrysophlegma Chlorolophus*—Lesser Yellow Naped Woodpecker. Found in Burma.

178, *Micropternus Phaiiceps*—Bengal Rufous Woodpecker. I have killed it in Goomsoor.

188, *Yunx Torquilea*—Common Wryneck. I saw one in Madras in June.

211, *Chrysococcyx Hodgsoni*—Emerald Cuckoo. Common in the Karenee Hills north-east of Shuaygheen in Burma.

211, *Chrysococcyx Xanthorhynchos*—Amethystine Cuckoo. One was killed in August at Rangoon by Colonel Tickell's syce in his own stable: he had been trying in vain for years to get a specimen.

250, *Sitta Castaneoventris*—Chesnut-bellied Nuthatch. Found in Burma.

253, *Dendrophila Frontalis*—Velvet-fronted Blue Nuthatch. A Burmese variety has black legs.

255, *Upupa Nigripennis*—Indian Hoopoe. Jerdon says ('Birds of India' Vol. 1, P. 393) that this bird is a permanent resident in Burma; such may be the case up the Irrawaddi, where the monsoon is less violent than at Rangoon or Tonghoo, but, in those two places, the hoopoes, though abounding in the dry season, are never to be seen during the rains. In fact, the appearance of the first one in November is held by the natives to be a certain sign that the wet weather has ceased. I must, however, acknowledge that I saw one at Prome on the 16th of August.

259, *Lanius Nigriceps*—Black-headed Shrike. Found in Burma.

288, *Tchitrea Paradisi*—Paradise Fly-catcher. I killed one of these birds in adult plumage in Goomsoor with the central tail feathers eighteen inches in length.

305, *Cyornis Banyumas*—Horsfield's Blue Redbreast. I have seen it near Hyderabad in the Deccan.

357, *Turdulus Wardii*—Ward's Pied Blackbird. I have seen this bird three times close to the Club at Madras. Many rare birds are to be found about the Presidency. They are less molested there than in most jungles and have almost as much cover of one kind or another.

445, *Hypsipetes Neilgherriensis*—Neilgherry Black Bulbul. Found also in Burma. I sent a specimen to the Madras Museum.

460, *Otocompsa Jocosa*—Red-whiskered Bulbul. This bird is said to do a great deal of mischief in gardens by pecking at the flowers of cucumbers, vegetable marrow, peas, &c., while the young fruit is forming: he is probably looking for an insect at the time, and, if so, does more good than evil to the gardener by saving half-a-dozen fruit for every one he destroys. I killed an albino of this species at Tonghoo in Burma.

474, *Oriolus Traillii*—Maronne Oriole. Found in Burma. I sent a specimen to the Madras Museum.

512, *Calliope Kamtschatkensis*—Common Ruby-throat. I sent a specimen to the Madras Museum from Burma.

561, *Phylloscopus Affinis*—Tickell's Tree warbler. I got it in Burma, and sent a specimen to the Madras Museum.

591, *Motacilla Dukhunensis*—Black-faced Wagtail. Found in Burma, coming to Rangoon about the beginning of November. They appear to get together towards evening as mentioned by Jerdon,—any evening during the cold season scores of them may be seen going to roost in the reeds of the pond in the deer paddock of the People's Park at Madras.

597, *Pipastes Arboreus*—European Tree Pipit. Found in Burma. I sent specimen to the Madras Museum.

671, *Urocissa Sinensis*—Red-billed blue Magpie. I have a note that I found this beautiful bird near Rangoon, it must,

however, have been *Urocissa Magnirostris*, mentioned in Jerdon's Birds of India, vol. 2, p. 311.

683, *Sturnopastor. Contra*—Pied Starling. Both in India and Rangoon I have found it breeding in the verandahs of houses.

684, *Acridotheres Tristis* (686, *A. Fuscus?*)—Common Myna. The Rangoon specimens of this bird struck me as being darker than those of India. It is a very quarrelsome bird; three or four of them may often be seen clustered together into a living ball, assaulting each other with great fury and most indiscriminately. At Rangoon I saw two males fight until one was so exhausted, that I took him up in my hand. The other was in hardly better plight, but flew off in company with a female, who was doubtless (as is often the case with man) the origin of the battle which she watched throughout with great interest but with most amusing calmness,

694, *Ploceus Baya*—Common Weaver-Bird. I lived in the house at Rangoon that Jerdon refers to in his account of this bird (Birds of India, vol. 2, p. 345.) during the years of 1864, and 1865, but the bayas all left it, as soon as the roof was tiled. I am, with Jerdon, inclined to doubt the generally accepted idea of the cock-bird constructing a nest, different to that of the female, for his own especial use; but both kinds are often seen together in pairs, and if the male does not have the house built for himself he sometimes occupies it. For a long time I fully believed that the cock-bird always inhabited a separate chamber, but now think that the unfinished are rejected, though why I have never been able to discover. Sometimes, perhaps, because the materials have been disturbed by their next neighbours, or, because a crow, after his inquisitive fashion, has examined it, and so made the female dislike it. They never employ old nests and the very first thing they do, on resuming their usual quarters for the breeding season, is to pull down the dwellings of the previous year, although they are apparent-

in perfect order. They are incorrigible little thieves, and will steal the building materials from each other's unfinished nests in the most unscrupulous way.

Jerdon's account of their nidification, in the note already quoted, is most excellent, and I can, from personal observation, taken through the blinds of a venetian shutter, within a few inches of where their nests were suspended from the thatch of a Rangoon bungalow, corroborate his statements. The artillery practice and other feats, which he refers to, may now (December 1867) be seen any day in Madras.

The following extract from Dr. John Fryer's account of Bombain and India, regarding these interesting little birds, is worthy of preservation.

“In the meanwhile Nature affords us a pleasant Spectacle for this Season, as well as Matter for Admiration; whereby I know not why we should deny Reason wholly to Animals: unless it be, Man having so much, they seem comparatively to have none. For here is a Bird (having its name from the Tree it chuses for its Sanctuary, the Toddy Tree) that is not only exquisitely curious in the artificial composure of its Nest with Hay, but furnished with Devices and Stratagems to secure itself and young ones from its deadly Enemy the Squirrel: as likewise from the Injury of the Weather; which being unable to oppose, it eludes with this Artifice, Contrives the Nest like a Steeple-hive, with winding Meanders; before which hangs a Penthouse for the Rain to pass, tying it by so slender a Thread to the Bough of the Tree that the Squirrel dare not venture his Body, though his mouth water at the Eggs and Prey within, yet it is strong enough to bear the hanging habitation of the Ingenious Contriver, free from all the Assaults of its Antagonist, and all the Accidents of Gusts and Storms, Hundreds of these Pendulous Nests may be seen on these Trees.

Here is another Tree called Brabb,* bodied like a Cocoe, but the Leaves grow round like a Peacock's Tail set upright, of the same substance with the Cocoe, only varying in Figure; the Fruit of this is less than the Cocoe, and filled with Gelly; the wine from this is preferred new, before the other, there is a Tuft at top cut off and boil'd eats Colliflowers: on which Tree these Birds build also."

696, *Ploceus Bengalensis*—Black-throated Weaver Bird. Abundant at Rangoon.

698, *Munia Rubronigra*—Chesnut-bellied Munia. These birds are in hundreds at Tonghoo.

699, *Munia Undulata*—Spotted Munia. Somewhat rare; but, in Rangoon, it may not unfrequently be seen feeding near, but not in company with, *Passer Montanus*. I have found the nest in the thatch of a house, and in a small tree close to my verandah, in Rangoon.

703, *Munia Malabarica*—Plain Brown Munia. At Madras, some young birds were brought to me in November 1866.

708, *Passer Cinnamomeus*—Cinnamon-headed Sparrow. Found in Burma. I sent a specimen to the Madras Museum.

710, *Passer Montanus*—Mountain Sparrow. One had its nest in a bison's skull in Colonel Phayre's verandah at Rangoon. Another pair would insist upon having their nest in one of my hats, which was left on a stand, off which several other hats were constantly being taken, and they held to their objectionable site with such obstinacy, that I had to lock up the article.

723, *Euspiza Aureola*—Brown-headed Bunting. The "Yellow Sparrow" during winter abounds at Shuaygheen, and is called by Burmans the "Paddy Sparrow," as arrives with it, and feeds on the ripening corn. I sent a specimen to the Madras Museum.

*Brabb is a seaman's term for the Palamyra Palm, whence derived I know not,
V.

724, *Melophus Melanicterus*—Crested Black Bunting. To be found in Burma. I sent a specimen to the Madras Museum.

761, *Calandrella Brachydactyla*—Short-toed or Social Lark. Jerdon says ("Birds of India" Vol. 2, P. 427,) that he once bagged twelve dozen of these birds after a discharge of both barrels of his gun, and that many wounded escaped. Does not he mean three dozen? I got twenty-seven or twenty-nine—I forget which—in a double shot at Nagode, in Central India, but a *hundred and forty-four*, appears to me a mis-print.

767, *Alauda Gulgula*—Indian Sky-Lark. It soars quite out of sight, and may be heard long before it comes low enough to be seen. Jerdon says (Birds of India, vol. 2, p. 435) that comparatively few residents in India are aware that a sky-lark is common in almost every part of India, and when they go to a hill station, observe this bird, perhaps for the first time, with equal surprise and delight. This is very true. I have known people rave about the larks on the hills, who were not aware that they may be heard every day in the plains, and even on the parade ground on the Island at Madras.

774, *Osmotreron Bicincta*—Orange breasted Green Pigeon. This bird swarms in Upper Pegu, Shuaygheen and Tonghoo, it always appeared to me to be much more wary and difficult to get at than *Crocopus Chlorigaster*.

780, *Carpophaga Sylvatica*—Green Imperial Pigeon. I found a nest at Russelcondah in Goomsoor, and watched it until the young birds, two in number, left, one or two (young ones) were afterwards brought in by Shikarees, but we could not rear them.

798, *Chalcophaps Indicus*—Bronze-winged Dove. Common as it is, and beautiful withal, few birds are so little known, even to good sportsmen. I saw one close to Coonoor, 5886 feet above the level of the sea, and have found it more abundantly at Russelcondah than in any other place where I have been.

Chalcophaps Chrysochlora a native of Australia, a specimen of which from the Sydney Museum is in the Madras collection, very much resembles this, but *C. Indicus* is distinguished by a white forehead in the male, and a greyish white one in the female.

803, *Pavo Cristatus*—Common Peacock, and 804 *Mnticus* Burmese Peacock. Jerdon expresses his belief that various nearly affined species will propagate, *inter se*, and produce fertile offspring—and I have seen a splendid specimen of a cross between the blue and green necked Pea-fowl of India and Burman, which was pointed out to me by Blyth in the collection of a rich native in Calcutta.

836, *Eupodotis Edwardsii*—Indian Bustard. I have counted twelve together at Raidroog, near Bellary. "When raised," as Jerdon remarks (Birds of India, vol. 2, p. 610) "it generally takes a long flight, sometimes three or four miles, with a steady continued flapping of its wing, at no great height above the ground," and under these circumstances it is often by young sportsmen, taken for a vulture, which bird, were it not for the peculiar motion of the wings during these flights, it very much resembles.

863, *Grus Antigone*—Sarus Crane. It makes very good soup and a cutlet from the breast of a young bird is not to be despised.

873, *Rhynchæa Bengalensis**—Painted Snipe. Although, as Jerdon says, (Birds of India, vol. 2, p. 678) the Painted Snipe flies heavily, and but a short distance, no bird is so often missed I believe it breeds in Burma.

*This species is now generally admitted to be identical with that from the Cape of Good Hope (*R. CAPENSIS*); but the birds which I saw in South Africa appeared to me to be larger, and certainly brighter in plumage, than any I have met with in either India or Burma.

874, *Macrorhamphus Semipalmatus*—Snipe-billed Godwit. I have killed it in January near Rangoon, feeding close to the Whimbrel (*Numenia phaeopus*) and the Stilt (*Himantopus candidus*).

899, *Recurvirostra Avocetta*—Avocet. I have found it near *Gooty, in the Ceded Districts, and at the Chilka Lake.

912, *Euryzona Canningi*—Banded Rail. Lieutenant McGoun, sent me a beautiful specimen from Port Blair, in the Andamans. I forwarded it to the Madras Museum, but it was, I think, lost *en route*.

915, *Leptoptilos Argala*—Gigantic Stork. I found some adjutants breeding on large trees, on a rocky island in the Chilka Lake, near pelicans, and a couple of sea-eagles.

917, *Mycteria Australis*—Black-necked Stork. Very common in Burma, but very difficult to get at.*

921, *Ardea Goliath*—Giant Heron. I have killed on the Sitang River. near Kyat Zoo.

925, *Herodias Alba*—Large Egret. This, and the smaller, Egret (*H. Egrettoides*), are to be found in thousands at Rangoon.

930, *Ardeola Leucoptera*—Pond Heron or Paddy Bird. At Madras, in January, I saw one of these birds capture an insect in the air, leaving his perch on a tree and returning, much as a bee-eater would do.

933, *Ardetta Cinnamomea*—Chestnut Bittern. Excellent eating.†

937, *Nycticorax Griseus*—Night Heron. Common in Madras, in Secunderabad, and in Rangoon during the dry season, but from its nocturnal habits it is but little known to most men.

* Near Kya Zoo, in Burma, in 1859, I succeeded in getting within twenty yards of a pair of these birds, but I had no gun with me.

E. B.

† I can corroborate this statement from personal experience.

E. B.

I have often seen it on the wing during the day, but only in consequence, I think, of its roosting-place having been disturbed.

938, *Tantalus Leucocephalus*—Pelican Ibis. I have found it breeding in the Northern Circars, near Chicacole, I think, but forget the exact place.

941, *Threskiornis Melanocephalus*—White Ibis. For an amusing account of the habits of this bird, and the valuable discovery therefrom, *vide* old Bailey's *Dictionary*, as also Fryer's *Travels in the East*.

944, *Phanicopterus Roseus*—Flamingo. They swim like swans, and are most difficult of approach; no bird that I know of is more so. They are very common in the Ceded Districts, near Bellary. I think I have seen them sleeping on the water. Jerdon, in his *Catalogue*, published in 1839, says: "I think Swainson is perfectly justified in placing this bird amongst the ducks, from its external structure alone, and I see that its internal anatomy fully confirms this view. In fact, the natives of India recognize its alliance with this family, by calling it "Heron Goose," or "King Goose."

951, *Nettapus Coromandelianus*—White-bodied Goose-teal. I have seen a pair, on more occasions than one, fly off a tree, where they had a nest —cotton teal of sportsmen.

952, *Dendrocygna Awsuree*—Whistling-teal. M——found a nest with, I think, fourteen eggs in it, in some grass near Rangoon.

954, *Casarca Rutila*—Ruddy Sheldrake. It is the Henza of the Burmese pagoda, although the representation is generally much more like that of a cock.

960, *Anas Ceryophyllacea*—Pink-headed Duck.—I have never seen it in Burma, Jerdon says (*Birds of India*, vol. 2, p. 891), that "it shows a decided preference for tanks and jheels well-sheltered by overhanging bushes, or abounding in dense reeds;" and, in just such a spot, I have shot it about twenty miles from Secunderabad. I forget the date, but it was after the rains had set in.

963, *Mareca Penelope*—Wigeon. More common in Burmah than in India.

967, *Branta Rufina*—Red-crested Pochard. I have shot it in the Northern Circars, and it is to be seen, but not easily got at, in most of the large backwaters, from Chicacole to the Northward.

968, *Aythya Ferina*—Red-headed Pochard. I have killed this species in the Northern Circars, Bellary 6th December.

970, *Fuligula Marila*—Scaup Pochard. I saw, but could not bag several ducks of this description (or very like it) in January on the marshes and salt lakes between Chicacole and Berhampore in the Northern Circars.

979, *Kroikocephalus Ichthyatus*—Great black-headed Gull. I shot one of these fine birds on the Chilka Lake, while it was trying to kill a wounded Pin-tail (*Dafila acuta*), which I had just knocked over.

1004, *Pelecanus Philippensis*—Grey Pelican. Jerdon says (Birds of India, vol. 2, p. 860.) "I have visited one Pelicanry in the Carnatic, where the Pelicans have (for ages I was told) built their rude nests, on rather low trees in the midst of a village, and seemed to care little for the close proximity of human beings." I saw just such a Pelicanry in a village in the Northern Circars, between Chicacole and Berhampore.

PART II.

NOTES ON MAMMALS OF INDIA.

The following extracts from "Notes on Jerdon's Mammals of India by an Indian Sportsman and Lover of Natural History," may interest some of the friends for whom Vagrant has printed his *olla podrida*.

No. 1—HOONOOMAN MONKEY.

Most travellers and all sportsmen in India are more or less acquainted with some of the varieties of these large and handsome monkeys which, standing very high on the legs, with bodies 30, and tails 43, inches in length, attaining (*vide page 4 of Jerdon*,) a still larger size and in height and figure resembling greyhounds more than the baboons and apes generally seen in menageries and with showmen, are to be seen in most forests and, in Upper and Central India, in the plantations, groves, or gardens close to most villages and temples; but those who have not watched them when alarmed or excited, or who have only seen them in confinement as melancholy looking prisoners, or when, made insolent by the reverence paid to them by pious Hindoos, they lounge in indolent familiarity and perfect impunity about gardens, grain stores and temples, can hardly realize their wonderful power and grace in jumping. All sportsmen must like Jerdon "have seen them cross from tree to tree, "a space of 20 to 30 feet wide, with perhaps 40 to 50 feet in "descent and alight in safety on the branch they sought." I think that I have seen even more astonishing and bolder springs made by them from one rock to another. But although it is not easy to over-estimate the grace, precision and wonderful activity of these creatures in their movements among trees or rocks, I do not agree with Jerdon as to their rapidity when on "all fours."

When at Russelcondah, I came on a small foraging party on two or three trees about half a mile from the wooded hill in which were their head quarters. Being well mounted and in the hope of a gallop at new game, I had them turned out of the trees and *laid into* their leader, an immense male, with an idea that he would give me a rattling burst before I closed with him. The ground was dry rice land, with high banks, and therefore I thought more in favor of monkey than horse; yet I closed with the poor brute in a very few fields, and after one or two sharp turns so pressed "Entellus" that he threw himself down in despair, cursing me most heartily I doubt not, but looking so miserable that I had not heart to hit him with my riding stick, I had not a spear, and was contented with throwing my hat in his face, and allowing him to go unhurt in body whatever he may have been in mind.

The horse, an Arab stallion of pure blood made eager in encounter by having been ripped by his first boar, an accident which as often improves a bold as it mars a faint-hearted hunter, certainly was a glorious one in pursuit of any animal that could be speared and enjoyed closing with it most keenly, but in this case I think I could have done nearly as much off a clever pony.

NO. 2—HOONOOMAN MONKEY (DOUBTFUL RACE.)

Jerdon remarks, that, this race was founded on a single skin from the table-land of Southern India, and, that, he thinks it by no means impossible that another race does take the place of "Entellus" there.

If this be a distinct species, it is, I believe, to be found in the Koodlighee Talook, S. W. of Bellary, probably over Mysore and the Western Deccan.

I remarked that in the Koodlighee Talook the "Lungoors" appeared to be of a lighter color, to have longer hair, and to prefer bare rocks far from, instead of mango groves, &c., in the vicinity of villages, and to be even more than usually bold and graceful in reckless and beautiful jumping. The longer hair may have been their winter clothing, but I cannot account for my fancies about the other peculiarities.

On two or three occasions I encamped close to one of the hills in that Talook, and was much amused by the regular habits of a small colony of these monkeys, under the command, very strictly enforced, of a fine male. Like most others in that part of the country the hill was a mass of rocks and boulders, affording safe cover to panthers. The monkeys lived in the hill all day; each evening they were to be seen returning home under the command of their chief, who before leaving, or allowing any of them to leave, a rock, carefully reconnoitred every inch of ground before him, especially if it was open, prior to rushing as hard as he could to the next vantage ground; this reached, he called the others, who in the meantime had, all but their heads, been carefully concealed and who followed, one at a time, as hard as they could go, some of the females, of course, with infants clinging to them: they did not object to our watching these manœuvres which were continued along one face of the hill until they reached a point sloping at an angle of about 45°, down a smooth slab, for perhaps 50 yards towards a very peculiarly T-shaped mass of boulders, which rose right out of the plain and was severed from the hill by a chasm, nothing but a bird could be suspected of daring to cross. At the top of this slope, the monkeys having assembled, their chief commenced his last rush *down* headlong to the edge of the precipice, which reached, he flew, (there is no other word for it), at a different angle *upwards* across the chasm to the bare face of the rock, which T-like, crowned the isolated mass and the summit of which appeared to afford very scant accomodation for the others,

not more than a dozen at most;—he was followed, one by one, by his wives—those with babies jumping as boldly as the rest. I observed, however, that one lady, and some of the half grown youngsters, had to make a second attempt, having either failed to get up pace enough, or loosing courage at the crisis; all having reached their roost, were allowed some minutes' relaxation before being ordered to bed, some of the children even began to play. This however was soon stopped by the master making an angry rush round the rock, biting every one he met—on which all, himself excepted, appeared to go to sleep. He, until it was too dark to see more, would sit motionless but with eyes eagerly fixed on the hill they had left and on which a panther probably would appear.

No. 5—FLYING FOX.

Jerdon remarks that, before these bats fly off for their nightly rounds, they fly cautiously down and touch water if it is at hand, but, that he could not ascertain if they took a sip or merely dipped part of their bodies in. I have always fancied that they drink on these occasions, they certainly do not fish as has been sometimes supposed. They often turn in their flight and appear to hawk at, or pursue some object in the air: therefore, unless it is very clear that they are not in the least degree insectivorous, I think, that they would not pass over a moth or flying ant that crossed their line of flight, I attempted to calculate the numbers in a colony, probably the one so well described by Tickell, page 19 of Jerdon, as it was close to his house in Rangoon. In five minutes a friend and I counted upwards of six hundred as they passed over head en route to their feeding grounds: supposing their nightly exodus to continue for twenty minutes, this would give upwards of two thousand in one roosting place exclusive of those that took a different direction.

Since my notes at page 6 were written, I have carefully watched bats when they commenced their nightly flights and have been convinced that they drink when they touch the water as described by Jerdon at page 18. This habit is however not confined to flying foxes, but is common to all the other species of bats I know of.

During the present hot season, (1869) at about dusk each evening I have been in the habit of swimming in a bath close to my house in the Artillery lines at Kamptee, and while so employed have constantly seen bats of many kinds strike the water close to me as I floated about the bath or sat on one of the steps with only my head visible.

When they were coming towards, or crossing me, it was impossible from the fading light and rapid flight of the animals to see why they struck the water, which they sometimes did with sufficient force to cause both splash and sound. When they were flying from me however I have distinctly seen them lower their head towards the water and almost as distinctly have seen them drink.

At any rate that they do drink at these times, I feel sure.

No. 12—BURMAH BEAR.

If *ursus* "Malayanus" be the Burmah bear; the description under No. 90, does not give a clear idea of it. The Burmah bear has a glossy black coat, with short and smooth hair, muzzle blackish, but face, mouth and lower jaw dirty-white, throat black, dividing the white part just mentioned from a large, heart-shaped white mark covering nearly the whole breast with a large black spot in centre and a few minute black dots over remaining portion, the lower part of this heart is continued by a white line between the fore-legs, and widened

out again on the belly into a large irregularly-shaped spot. The head is flattened and very short, with far more of a canine than an ursine expression—ears very small, smooth and round. The animal is somewhat smaller than *ursus labiatus* of the same age and sex (female about three years old) would be, but very powerful and certainly far more intelligent and lively than any specimen of *ursus labiatus* I have seen. These notes were taken from a well known animal, "Ada"—presented by me to the People's Park at Madras, and which in good humor, playfulness and amusing tricks much resembles the bear mentioned by Sir Stamford Raffles in his notes. Like his pet, "Ada"—is never out of temper and always ready to play with any one. While she was with me, "Ada" would not eat meat in any shape. But I was told by one of the ship's officers that another of the same species, "Ethel," (also presented by me to the Committee of the People's Park of Madras and by them sent to England) while coming over from Burmah, killed and devoured a large fowl put into her cage. I do not doubt the *killing* for at that time "Ethel" had not been long caught, and was a little demon in temper, but suspect that, while attention was taken off, some knowing lascar secured the body of the chicken and gave her credit for having swallowed it. There were however certainly some feathers and other remains of fowl in the cage.

Since the above was written I have heard of poor Ada's death; her last illness, more than ever proved her good qualities, for she was, I am assured, up to the end as gentle as it was possible for animal to be. She will be a great loss to the Madras People's Park, to the young visitors especially; for she was in every way one of the most engaging pets I have ever known. I fancy that these smooth-haired bears climb even more readily than do our shaggy Indian breed. "Ada's" greatest delight was in getting up small trees, and the only offence I ever knew her guilty of, was a propensity to get on the roof of my out houses at Rangoon, once there, she damaged the tiles, rare and

valuable articles in Burmah, in the most ruthless manner. Even when she was a chubby infant, I could, by merely striking the bark, or a branch some feet above her head, cause her to scramble up almost any tree. At this time poor Ada, a Burman otter and a large white poodle were, like many human beings of different tastes or pursuits, very fast friends.

The alliance was however an excellent illustration of mind and training over matter; for the old dog, although toothless from years and the weakest of the trio, was much respected by the others who obeyed him most dutifully whenever he thought fit to exercise authority. Jealousy was, I fear, his worst point: when he was excelled in any way by his companions he lost temper sadly. If "Ada" after a game, scrambled into a tree out of his reach, he waited with patient gravity for her to come down again, when he forthwith assaulted her most savagely; in the same way when he and the otter were swimming together, as they often did in a pond near my house, and the latter by diving, or speed got away from him, the old dog would at once swim to the bank, where he watched until the otter, as it always did, came to shore, and lay sprawling half in and half out of the water, squeaking loudly to any of its acquaintances, he then seized it, always by the nape of the neck, and ducked its head under water in the most comical way.

No. 13.—INDIAN BLACK BEAR.

In Goomsoor and other parts of the Ganjam district where bears abound they do considerable damage to the sugar-cane plantations which sometimes are very large, often covering many acres. It is perhaps needless to say, that when ripe, a field of sugar-cane is almost as dark and dense a mass of vegetation as even the tropics can produce.

Into these luscious thickets come the bears at night, silently when en route, for then they might be turned back, and at once proceed to business, utterly regardless of the vile noise of the sugar mills; one of which, at least, is in the corner of every field two or three in a large one, working, while the cane is ripe by day and night for weeks together without intermission except perhaps for an hour at dawn, on rude wooden screws, which roughly hewn out of logs of timber, make a woful creaking to be heard for an immense distance on a still night, and as an Ooriah farmer once expressed himself, causing the bears to "feel as if they had stones in their ears," *i. e.* as if they were deaf.

It is very easy to find where the bears are, as if sought for they sometimes three together, (dam and two nearly full-sized cubs to wit) may be heard making their way through or pulling down and munching the canes, but it is almost impossible to get a shot, for the brighter the moon outside—the blacker and nearer the color of Bruin's coat is the impenetrable gloom within, while he is quite cunning enough to keep perfectly still when any one approaches him, and to look out for a clear line of country when he chooses his starting place to the nearest safe cover at daybreak,—therefore although the temptation to go out is not often resisted, the results are seldom satisfactory.

Often after mess on a moonlight night during the cold season some excited Ooriah would run into Russelcondah to tell us that bears were in his field perhaps so close that we could hear his mills at work. Guns, horses and blankets were forthwith ordered out; and one, or perhaps two or three of us would start for the mill which, the detestable creaking set aside, was a pleasant spot to visit.

The cane was crushed between two large screws working by means of bullocks, three or four relays of which, fed on the refuse cane were always on the spot. The expressed juice was

INDIAN BLACK BEAR

led into large earthen pots which as soon as filled were set upon a roaring fire, always burning at the mill, and thus the coarse sugar was prepared in the field in which it grew. The scene lit up by the fire as it was fed by the crushed cane, was always a bright and cheery one. The people were happy and comfortable, and as the night air in that part of the country is very chilly, the fire was by no means unpleasant. Presently some one sent out to explore, reports that the bears are at work in a certain part of the field. Off to it we at once go, dive into the thicket and hear the enemy crashing through the reeds close to us. An effort is made to make him come into view or to drive him into the moonlight—he is far too cunning for this however, and either with an angry grunt bolts into the thickest part of the plantation, or more probably stands perfectly still until we have passed him. We return, have our blankets spread on a heap of straw or cane leaves in a corner of the mill, and regardless of the dismal noise go to sleep until the bears are heard again, and we are roused to go forth once more, perhaps three or four times on similar bootless errands. Morning comes and we go back again, vowing that we shall never again be tempted out to try to shoot bears in cane-fields.

During three years that my regiment was quartered at Russelcondah, although expeditions of this sort took place, as far as some of us were concerned, almost every moonlight night during the sugar season—and although we were almost all pretty-well trained to bear shooting in an orthodox way; I do not think that half a dozen bears were killed in these trips. I do not now remember being at the death of one bagged in this manner, although I must have assisted in disturbing many dozens. Bears have, I know, been often speared from horseback but I have only had one opportunity of trying this feat. The horse I rode, a keen hog-hunter, closed within spear's reach of the bear quite as readily as he would have done with a boar and allowed me to use my weapon freely.

No. 16—COMMON INDIAN OTTER.

I can corroborate Jerdon's remark at page 87, that though partly nocturnal in their habits, otters may be seen hunting after the sun is high. Late one morning, I saw a party, at least six in number, leave an island on the Chilka lake and swim out apparently to fish their way to another island, or the main land, either at least two miles off, and followed them for more than half the distance in a small canoe. They worked most systematically in a semi-circle with intervals of about fifty yards between each, having I suppose, a large shoal of fish in the centre, for every now and then an otter would disappear, and generally when it was again seen it was well inside the semi-circle with a fish in its jaws, caught more for pleasure than for profit, as the fish, as far as I could see, were always left behind untouched beyond a single bite; I picked up several of these fish, which as far as I can recollect, were all mullet. Like all wild things about that glorious bit of almost unknown water, these otters did not appear to dread man; when they rose, as they often did close to the canoe, each took a bold look before it dived again, generally while up, uttering short sharp squeaks.* I shot the largest of the band and (as I deserved, for the act was useless and wanton) lost him. The others however fished on in the same order well out to open sea, for the Chilka lake is little short of that—until I left them; my boatman being too exhausted at the pace he had to push the little canoe along to keep near them to follow further. I have seen three or four otters that would follow their master like a dog, and had one that would do so, keeping up all the time a series of most unreasonable and annoying squeaks.

I trust that I may be excused if I attempt to describe the Chilka lake: for even among Indians, there may be many who have not a very distinct idea of its extent or even where it is.

* A writer in some sporting periodical remarks, that he saw an otter rear erect and half out of the water. This position was often assumed by those I now write about.

This magnificent piece of water, I speak only as a sportsman or as lover of wild life and wild scenery, divides the Ganjam district, the extreme limit of the Madras Presidency in the direction of the Northern Circars, from the Bengal province of Cuttack, and may in rough terms be said to extend nearly from Ganjam to Juggernaut, that ill-famed focus of Orissa idolatry. It thus runs pretty nearly north and south, parallel to the Bay of Bengal, from which on the eastern shore it is only separated by a neck or ridge of sand hills not much more than a mile broad; now only known to pursuers of wild fowl, antelope or foxes, and to the few pilgrims from the south who still take that road to Juggernaut. In former days it had a evil name however, for it was infested by a band of Thugs, who lived by plundering and murdering pilgrims going to the temples: coming from Juggernaut, after priests and holy men had secured their dues,—there probably did not remain much worth stealing. A batch of these Thugs had been, as was the good old custom, executed upon the spot where their crimes had been committed and their bodies, suspended in iron cages, once adorned an immense gibbet which stands, or stood, at Priaghee near the south-eastern corner of the lake; and under which my servants, looking more to a dry spot than the propriety of the measure, once pitched my little shooting tent. I did not find that the spirits of the ruffians, their bodies had become dust long before, or of their victims, for it was within a few yards of this spot that most of the murders had been committed, interfered in the least either with my sport or my comfort. But to return to the Chilka lake, which is salt, or brackish, water throughout, is (I speak from recollection only, not from a book, so may be, very probably am, wrong) about forty miles long and is nowhere more than about sixteen miles, generally not half that, in breadth. Unless in a very few places it is shallow, hardly ever beyond the reach of the long bamboo poles with which the boats used on the lake, are pushed against the wind. For miles together there are immense spits or shoals, of acres of

sand or mud over which the water is, in spots, often not more than a few inches deep, and on which water-fowl, of I believe almost every kind that visits India, swarm beyond my powers of attempting to describe. Scattered at intervals are several beautiful islands, most of them however wooded to the water's edge so densely that it is of little use trying to penetrate them. The shores of the lake however abound with game of almost every description (ibex and elephant excepted) known to the sportsmen of Southern India. Although the country adjoining the hills is at certain seasons very unhealthy, near the coast there is little to dread; and the climate, from December to March is delightful; and on the Chilka, were it not that one has to cease shooting for very shame or pity, for the endless varieties of water-fowl are so tame, so well accustomed to harmless fishing boats, and so little to guns, that shooting them soon becomes butchery instead of sport, the amount of the bag would be limited only by the supply of ammunition. I certainly cannot picture to myself a spot more likely to please and interest a sportsman or a naturalist than this noble sheet of water which during the cold season is visited by, I think, most of the migratory birds that resort to India. The Chilka might now be very easily visited from Madras. A coasting steamer would drop the passenger at Munsoorcottah close to Berhampore, a small military post, then a pony or a palankeen takes him to Ganjam past the civil station of Chetterpore, the head-quarters of the Ganjam collectorate, where, as in all places where Indian Civilians dwell, hospitality and lovers of field sports are sure to be.

At Ganjam, once a large civil and military station abandoned, I believe, about 1820, in consequence of an outbreak of fever which has never re-visited the spot, he easily finds shelter in one of the fine old houses now deserted.

Ten or twelve miles further on is Rumba, near the southern extremity of the lake; there let him hire two large boats which he can get by the day for a very small sum, put his palankeen

into one as a sleeping place for himself, of course he must dine, dress, and in fact live in the open air. His servants and kit are in the other boat. Then let him go forth and slay until his ammunition fails him.

The little dug-out canoes of the Ooriah fisherman make admirable substitutes for duck punts and all the more interesting that the unusual weight of the white man, his guns and henchman is sure to disturb the caulking of some leak through which the water pours in a way startling to contemplate; the big boats or land being miles off, a rough sea, at least for so frail a craft, being on and some enormous alligators having been seen that morning.

Our boatman however quietly shoves the canoe to the nearest shoal, which is covered with water birds beyond count or calculation, and while we are murdering some of them, calmly gets out, clutches from the bottom a handful of sticky black clay and crams it into the leak which it perfectly stops for half an hour or so when the same proceeding has to be repeated.

The following extract from a letter, signed W. C. R. which was published in the *Field* about the end of 1868 (last year,) and described fly-fishing on the Bowanee river, between the foot of the Neilgherries and the Coimbatore District, is interesting. I must however say, that until reading it, I always fancied otters had not the slightest dread of crocodiles and, from what I had seen of an attempt made by an alligator, to pull down a large spaniel in the river near Nagode in Central India, supposed that so active a swimmer as an otter would easily escape from the larger creature. Certainly both in Burmah and India otters are seen fishing, close to and apparently utterly regardless of alligators:—

“Another unusual thing about these fish was that the presence of otters seemed so little to disturb them, that I have taken fish from a pool through which a pack of otters had just

There were a number of these animals in this river, and for some time I was puzzled to know how they and the crocodiles managed to get on together, as the latter have a peculiar weakness for dogs, (of which the otter is a distinct sort of connection) and indeed are not fastidious about any animal not too large to be pulled under water. One day, when sitting on the bank among the jungle, I saw a number of otters fishing, and as I was much interested in watching their graceful motions, I kept perfectly still. About a hundred yards below where the otters were so busily at work I suddenly saw the snout and eyes of a crocodile steal above the water for a moment and then sink back. This occurred again, and so much nearer to the fishing party that it was evident he was stalking them, and I watched the result with much interest. After a short interval the crocodile rose again, about thirty yards from the otter, but no sooner was the water broken by the hideous head of the reptile than an otter, which evidently was stationed on the opposite bank as a sentinel, sounded the alarm by a whistling sort of sound. In an instant those in the water rushed to the bank and disappeared among the jungle, no doubt much to the disgust of the mugger.* It was curious how instantly they seemed to know the form of danger by which they were menaced, and they evidently did so from their leaving the water, which was the very last thing they would have done had I suddenly shown myself."

As these are the very irregular notes of a vagrant, I trust to be pardoned for giving an account of the adventure of the spaniel just alluded to; although the tale has nought to do with the wild mammals of India.

The bitch in question was a very powerful one for her size, and had a peculiarly deep-toned *English* bark; (we know how sadly this degenerates in India) I mention this as the deep voice probably saved her life.

*Hindustani for alligator—VAGRANT.

When the Field Division, I was then attached to, was encamped on the plain near Nagode; I was one morning strolling in the neighbourhood of our camp and trying to induce a very fine Clumber spaniel to hunt for quail and painted partridges.

The bitch was however terribly "*gun-shy*;" she had, I believe, been one of the famous Lucknow Garrison, and possibly her nerves had been affected by the horrors of war; so, to re-assure her, I left my gun with my horsekeeper and took her to the river where there was a dark deep pool, the morning was a very hot one, and she was thoroughly enjoying her swim, when, to my horror, I saw rapidly approaching her, against the stream, the triangular mark on the water which betokened the approach of an alligator; I called her of course but, thinking that I was about to throw something for her to fetch, she turned and swam quickly towards the alligator (which by this time I could see perfectly); thus meeting it face to face. As it tried to seize her by the head, it twisted its body and evidently attempted to upset her with its tail. The brute, hitherto accustomed to flight on the part of a victim, was perhaps cowed by the unexpected turn and rapid advance towards it of the bitch: I remembered afterwards that, as she was seized she reared almost out of the water which she struck hard with her strong forefeet, and that, at the same time, in her mortal fear, she uttered a deep bark.

This doubtless still more flurried her assailant while I, from the bank a few feet off, almost on the level of the water, probably assisted her by my howls and contortions. She was not pulled under and swam for dear life to me—accompanied, close at her side and shadow-like, by her demonical foe, I own, that when stooping to help her on to the stone on which I stood, I felt almost nervous for he might then, very easily have seized her, or made a snap at my arm. The spaniel bolted up the steep bank, but the alligator remained for some seconds with

his head so close to the flat rock on which I was, that I could have touched him with a short spear or even a walking stick, had either been at hand, glaring meanwhile, with the most evil eye I have ever had turned on me, and then slowly and unwillingly sank at my feet. Long as is this tale, for it is, I feel, told most vilely, the entire performance did not take many seconds. All was throughout as visible to the eye as if it had taken place in the swimming bath of the Club at Madras, for the pool, although very deep, was not much broader and the water quite as clear. The alligator appeared between 5 and 6 feet long. He had cut the head of the bitch deeply in four places with his teeth. These wounds were speedily cured, not so those to her nerves; for many days elapsed before she would, unless compelled, leave my tent. I put several bullets into the alligators about this river, but did not bag one. There could hardly have been a better opportunity than this of observing the tactics of an alligator, and from it I am led to think that the otter, lithe and active as an eel, would, in the water, have little to dread from any rival swimmer.

*

In corroboration of what I have written regarding the countless birds on the Chilka Lake: I need only say that, in one day's shooting between Burcool, the first bungalow in the Bengal Presidency and Rumba, which is on the Madras borders, a distance [I speak from memory, so may be wrong] of about 20 miles, I bagged from my boat and with great ease, fifty grey and pintail duck, besides several teal and other water birds and a fine peacock which I saw on the shore and, having landed, got after a short stalk: I might have largely added to this bag of duck, but it would have been wanton cruelty on my part to do so; for the flesh of the birds was useless to me or my people who had more game than they could eat, and I merely shot up to the number here mentioned, in order to make a *bag*, a proceeding which I do not attempt to defend; but it is often hard to restrain the trigger finger.

Two or three days after this, at Priaghee, on the opposite side of the lake, I killed, in one afternoon, twenty-two curlew, one of the most wary birds known of; thirdly, in illustration of the utter disregard of man shown by some of the water fowl on this lake, I may mention, that, until going there I had never killed a pelican, nor one of the beautiful snake-birds, or darters as they are sometimes called, (*Plotus melanogaster*, Jerdon's birds of India, Vol. 3, No. 1008) and although most anxious to examine one of each, I really could not do so, for the birds swam so close to my canoe, as I was pushed about the shallows, or sat on the nets and fishing stakes and watched me with such confidence, or unconcern, thinking doubtless that I was merely a fisher less expert than they were; that I had not heart to kill one of them; my first pelican was shot several days after leaving the Chilka, but I certainly did, after some time, murder one of the darters.

I hope that I may not be supposed to write this from egotism, merely wish to illustrate what was said at page 207.

Wild geese both "barred-headed" and the "black-backed," Nos. 949 and 950, Vol. 3 of Jerdon's birds of India, are to be found in large flocks on the Chilka during the winter, and it is only at this season that any of the birds on this lake should be killed.

No. 19—THE TIGER.

I have often heard doubt thrown on the statement made in the "Old forest Ranger," (I mean Colonel W. Campbell's well known work, not the Old Shikarry's) and referred to at page 96 of Jerdon, that a tiger is sometimes driven into a net and speared; about this I know nought, but near Goomsoor I saw three full-grown bears run into a net that had been placed across one side of a wood we were beating, and all get so entangled that they might easily have been speared had a fit

weapon been at hand ; instead of this they were very unfairly shot, the noise they made can be better imagined than described. A net that could hold three bears, might puzzle a tiger.

I have to apologize for recording a deed so unsportsman-like and so worthy of the vilest poacher : but in justice to my comrade and myself, I must explain, that neither of us had an idea of what was going to happen, nor have I ever seen nets used except by this gang of beaters.

"*Toiles*" were however considered orthodox aids to sport until even the end of last century. Some old books I have, viz: the "Gentleman, Citizen and Countryman's Pleasant and Profitable Recreations," published in 1697, and "Healthful Amusements and Ingenious Exercises or the Nobleman's Pocket Companion" of a "later date," have no shame in recommending them while in a series of seventy excellent plates of the "British Sportsman," by Samuel Howlett, No. 10, drawn in 1798, "Toiling a buck," represents a fallow stag running into just such a net as I have mentioned.

We all know the stealthy movements of a cat and how wonderfully fitted to the habits of the creature is the beautiful mechanism that causes the noiseless footfall ; but, unless witnessed, it must be difficult to conceive the deadly silence in which so heavy an animal as a large tiger can make his way.

I was standing at the edge of a wood one burning day in April, the middle of the hot season in most parts of India. The dry leaves and twigs with which the ground was covered, rustled so audibly when moved by breeze or living creature, that one might have fancied it impossible for a mouse to pass unheard ; I remembered afterwards that a hare, a jungle hen, and some small lizard, had each as they ran by, attracted my attention, and that of the man beside me, by the crackling rustle of the dead leaves : and during our trip of three days,

even the deer of various kinds we saw could not move without making the presence of some living thing known as they got over the ground. A small herd of sambar especially, the day before, had galloped down hill with as much clatter of hoof as an equal number of troop horses.

Almost at the first distant shout of the beaters, the large man-eating tiger before mentioned came out close to me, so noiselessly that, had not my eye caught him, he might have passed unobserved by me, as he was by the trained and trusty gun-carrier standing at my elbow, and who, looking in another direction, and not seeing me raise the gun, had not, although his ears were from constant practice as keen to any noise on hill-side or in forest as those of the wildest animal, an idea that game was on foot until he heard the angry growl with which the animal received his death-wound.

Again, while my regiment was marching in the Northern Circars an officer's servant, who with the mess kit had, as is often done, preceded the corps to the next encamping ground, was, just at dusk and close to the mess guard, carried off the high road by a tiger; an infant he had in his arms when he was seized was quite unhurt in the awful rush that must have taken place. As far as I can remember this child was about eighteen months old, it would be interesting to know what effect the recollection of the scene may have on it in after-life.

On hearing of the tragedy next morning when we reached our encamping ground, three of us went back to the spot about three miles to try to recover the body. Except that we had to make our way in Indian file through thick thorny bushes under which some times we had to creep on hands and knees, the trail, marked with fragments of clothes, the cap, keys, purse, blood and hair, of the victim, was an easy one. The body was very little mangled so it was determined to wait for the return of the tiger, and in the mean time to put up a small platform

in the only tree near. I had work in camp, therefore left my two comrades who took breakfast and shelter from the sun (it was then near mid-day) under a bush close to, but not within sight of the body, which was not a pleasant spectacle during their meal. Their gun-carriers were about the spot, collecting the rough materials at hand for the platform; while all were thus employed the tiger carried off the body from their midst in open day and through not very thick brushwood without being observed by any one. I returned to them soon after, as they were then trying to follow the trail; this time without success, for the body had now neither blood nor rags to mark the path, and the ground was hard. It is difficult to conceive how the beast could thus have outwitted them, but so it was.

I have lately been fortunate enough to be able to watch a tiger for some time; and relate the incident, not that it is worth anything in itself, but because it may serve to illustrate in some way the cat-like tactics of the animal.

A few months ago, on the 17th of November 1868, while going to look for ibex, I was passing over the large hill in front of the Avalanche bungalow on the Kondahs, so often mentioned in these notes. Suddenly my gun carrier, a man well-known at Ootacamund, asked me for my glass and whispered that he could see a tiger crossing a bare ridge about half a mile off; his assistant corroborated this, but even with the glass, I could not succeed in making out what these two men had discovered with the naked eye. I fancy that I have as strong and quick vision as most men, backed by fair practice in observing wild animals; and on this occasion I own I thought the men were attempting to deceive me in order to restore my temper which had been sorely ruffled by them the day before. They insisted that they saw a large tiger, not a panther as I suggested it might be, and when it passed out of view, agreed that we should probably come on it again by skirting another spur of the hill: I consented to this, although without placing the slightest faith in

what they said. Presently, however, there was no doubt that they were right, for about five or six hundred yards from us, appeared the tiger, a magnificent hill-animal, looking in his Neilgherry winter clothing much heavier and shorter on the leg than any of his brethren of the plains ever do. He was quietly crossing a bare and rather rocky ridge, evidently looking out keenly for his breakfast and taking advantage of every inch of cover much, with all reverence be it said, as a cat in a cabbage garden looks out for sparrows. He sank nearly to a crouching position before attempting to top any ridge or hillock, and thus, with all but his head concealed, cautiously surveyed the ground in his front; to us, on his flank, he was perfectly visible. It may have been by chance, but as he was then working, he was able to take as much advantage of the wind as the most scientific deer stalker could have done. Twice he crouched in a half-sitting half-recumbant posture, which reminded me much of one of the quaint monsters of heraldry, and gazed, long and anxiously; over the valley between us, at the brow of the spur, whereon my two men and I were stretched as flat as we could lay ourselves. He evidently suspected that there was something uncanny there, but luckily the wind was blowing strong from him to us and moving the scanty grass sufficiently to puzzle his vision. The light shone full upon him and in the clear mountain atmosphere, which, I am not wise enough to explain why, always causes objects to appear nearer than they really are, even without the glass, one could almost have counted the stripes on his sleek and glossy coat. He must have remained in view for many minutes as he quietly passed along the mountain side; and when he disappeared, my men with admirable knowledge of ground, took me as fast as we could run to a spot which would, they said, cross his path. He must have increased his pace during this interval, or he may have discovered that there was something wrong in the air, for notwithstanding that we had only a short way to go in comparison to his, he was at a rapid trot, or *run* would be a more

correct term for the pace, and coming direct for us, just topping one hillock as our eyes rose to a level with the summit of the opposite one: we were in Indian file and dropped down on the grass without a whisper. This attracted his attention—but he could not make us out and, probably taking us, in our grey shooting clothes, for pigs or ibex at rest, commenced to stalk up to us most carefully. He was about 130 yards from us, with one of the beautiful Kondah glens between: on his hill and about 15 or 20 yards in his front was a single rhododendron about the same distance on mine was a small clump of three or four of those lovely shrubs, then glowing in all the full glory of their deep red blossoms,* he dropped on his belly at once and thus crept onwards to his bush, while, I making myself as snake like as possible, contrived to get forward to my clump. Thus stalking each other, so to speak, we mutually managed to decrease the distance between us. It was almost in vain however for the cunning brute kept his rhododendron stump so pertinaciously before him, that although I had a perfect view of his hind-quarters beyond it and he was facing me, I could not, although in a most favorable position to aim, get a shot at his chest. I think he would have come on beyond it had not one of my men tried to crawl after me; this caused him to jump up; as he turned I broke his hind leg—but although this stopped him so much that I managed to get up to him again and have two shots, one of them a very bad miss; he still lives to prey on the Todah buffaloes.† I would rather however have seen what I did then and have missed him altogether than have killed him without such a rare opportunity of watching a tiger.

I beseech that I may not be considered egotistical for telling this long story. There was nothing in its incidents which a nursery maid with an infant in her arms might, if she could

*There are two varieties of this beautiful tree on the Neilgherries; the gorgeous red one is to be found everywhere, but there is a second species of a lilac tint which is, I think, much more rare.

†He was afterwards known as the lame tiger. Poor beast it is to be hoped he did not fall a victim to the vile poisoners encouraged in Southern India by those who should oppose ignoble actions.

have got to the spot, not have looked calmly on at, for, when we were thus crawling towards each other, to get much nearer me he would have had to go down one bare hill-side and up another; a feat which no wild animal would attempt, not to mention that I had with me and my men three breech-loaders, which, even if I had missed him every time I pulled the trigger, would have made more noise than the nerves of the stoutest tiger would have been equal to.

Another cat-like habit of tigers is not often mentioned by sportsmen, although most of us must be well acquainted with the marks produced by it. I mean scratching and scoring trunks of trees with their claws, much as an ill-disposed cat sometimes does furniture. At one time I fancied that the animals merely did this by rearing against the trunk and certainly never suspected that they are in the habit of returning to the same tree for this purpose: I am now sure however that the latter is the case and am convinced that they not only rear, but climb, or rather run up the tree until they get a good hold for their claws near some fork or bough; why I am not prepared to say. A few months ago, while shooting on the Neilgherries with a friend, often quoted in these notes, he mentioned a tree to which tigers constantly resorted for this purpose and, in order to show me the height at which they left their marks took me to it: we found the tree not only most deeply and freshly scored many feet up the trunk, I think ten if not nearly twelve, I did not take a note of the height at the time, so may be wrong; but marks of tiger's hair left where the owner had evidently been clinging, cat-like, to the trunk far above any man's height; I took from the bark at least eight feet from the ground, a portion of a tiger's claw: this may support the native theory that their purpose in thus marking trees is to sharpen their claws: why they should trouble themselves by returning to a particular tree for this purpose, is more than I can suggest.

The animals, for judging from the marks there must have been at least two of them—had apparently, not many hours before, indulged in a regular game of romps at the trunk of this their favorite tree by rushing at it from across a small path and with the impetus thus acquired attempting to vie with each other in getting up it. What a grand bit of sport it would be to come suddenly upon them while thus engaged !!

No. 20—THE PANTHER.

I cannot help thinking that there is only one species of panther, leopard or pard, whatever the proper name may be, and that the varieties in color, shape, and size are accidental, or caused by climate or diet. I believe that a black cub has been found in a litter, the rest of which were of the usual color. The three or four specimens of the black panther I have seen, have always struck me as being of a glossy, not, as Jordon has it, of “a dull black color.” Vide page 100 of his book.

The specimen sent from Bangalore in 1867 (last year) and now in England, a portrait of which is in the *Illustrated London News* of the 8th February 1868, page 136, and the one now, August 1868, in the People's Park in Madras, although they appeared alike in color and spots, as far as the latter could be seen in particular lights, differed much in size, and, as it appeared to me, in the shape of the head, I fancied that the smaller, and far more savage animal, that in Madras, had a shorter and rounder skull than the other. This smaller panther was, I believe, sent to the People's Park, by H. H. the Rajah of Travancore,

I saw in Bangalore the skin of a panther, shot near Hyderabad in the Deccan, that had, besides being rather darker than usual, a large dark patch on the side that included several spots, a large blot or stain in fact.

At Nellicondah near Hyderabad in the Deccan, I saw, just at dawn, an immense panther, with what I thought was a dog in her mouth, she dropped it on my shot, which slightly damaged her, (it proved to be the neck and fore-quarters of a bullock) and rushed up the large hill of Nellicondah into a cave into the rocks about 300 yards from where I was. From my post at the other side of a small valley, I could perfectly see the path she had taken, although it would not have been of any use firing again at her, as she was gliding under stone or bush. While following her, I startled a bear, like the panther, returning home; it ran into the same cave, of which it was, I imagine, the rightful tenant, a prodigious row ensued, in which the bear evidently got worsted—for it came out incontinently tail first, and shuffled off at best speed and in very bad temper. To get to this den, I had to undergo almost the greatest trial my nerves have ever been put to.

Both animals passed through a cavern-like passage, evidently a highway under a rock, six or eight feet high, as many broad, and perhaps three times that in length; in the midst was a wild bee's nest, an inverted cone hanging down from some point of the roof to far less than my height from the ground; the bees seemed good tempered however, so remembering that, the panther had just passed once, and the bear twice, without disturbing them, I plucked up courage and crawled under the awful cluster. The panther at that critical moment came out of the den just above with an angry roar, I could not see her, but thought it probable that she would take the same path which she and the bear had just used, in which case we should have met in the narrow passage under the swarm; I did not dread her, but certainly did fear the bees.

Any one who will watch a kitten at play, can, from the way it conceals itself, form a fair idea of the difficulty in finding, still greater in shooting a panther among rocks. The instant the creature hears a footstep, or suspects that man or

beast is approaching, he sinks down on the spot, leaving only his ears and eyes peering above a stone: if he thinks he is observed, down goes the head, perhaps to be cunningly put up again to see if there is still safety, but more likely when the man walks up to the spot his only view of the "Will o' the Wisp" like beast is one short glimpse as it it glides fast and silently as a snake through rock and bramble a long way off; or, if it has been much frightened or enraged, a bolt, or rush, so headlong and rapid that merely the sharpest of snap shots can be had at it.

Well may Blyth say, vide Jerdon, page 100. "The pard is "a particularly silent creature, very stealthy, and will contrive "to dodge and hide itself in places where it would appear "impossible that a creature of its size could find concealment."

Jerdon says at page 100, that "they are popularly said to "be much in the habit of climbing trees, but this habit does not "seem to have been much noticed by late observers." That they get into trees occasionally, there is no doubt: but I do not think that they climb to any great height, or unless when disturbed by dogs or beaters.

The trees (for instance, rhododendrons of the Neilgherries, or the bastard banyan, pepul, or burr, whatever the proper name may be, "*ficus religiosa*," is, I believe, the botanical one, of most other parts of this country) that grow about the sides of rocks, ravines, or hills in which panthers are generally found, often have gnarled and distorted trunks, which with their long, broad and mis-shapen limbs, extending nearly horizontally across a ravine, or parallel to some large stone or boulder and perhaps overgrown with moss, lichen, or creeper, make admirable steps, bridges, ladders or short cuts of which man or beast, even dogs and goats, readily take advantage; but unless to make use of them for these purposes, it is, I think, doubtful whether undisturbed panthers resort to or climb trees.

There is not any point more disputed among Zoologists and sportsmen than whether there are two distinct species of panther or leopard, or whether the animals they find, differing in size and color, from very nearly the weight of a tigress down to that of a bull-dog, or from the darkest shade of the witch-loved black cat to a pale fawn marked with clusters of dark spots in rosettes are merely varieties of the same species. I am not naturalist enough to give an opinion, but as a sportsman, my impression is, that there is only one species of panther which from local or accidental causes differs in depth of color, in size and perhaps in habits as do all other animals: *e. g.* I have seen a town-educated bull terrier run along a narrow ledge only a few inches wide, connecting two windows overhanging a street and, with as much confidence as would a cat or one of our Indian squirrels, survey the scene below him, all this time barking at passers-by: a feat that certainly not one in one hundred of his country friends would dream of. Again, some of the tribes or clans of Karens who inhabit the wild mountains N. E. of Shuaygheen and Tonghoo in Burma live in villages, if they may be so termed, consisting of one immense bamboo house or barrack raised on bamboo piles very high above the ground, while the only access is through a trap-door cut in the floor of one of the passages, down this a steep and narrow bamboo ladder is lowered, forming about as *un-dog like* a path as one can well imagine. I have on two occasions seen Karen dogs descend these in the most matter-of-fact way. I argue from this that panthers brought up in forest would soon learn to avail themselves of or to haunt the branches of trees to which they could obtain access and thus get looked on as a distinct species.

A few lines more about the black panther. Sportsmen know that, when the light falls at favorable angles upon the skin of this animal, the rosettes or clusters of spots are very visible and do not appear to differ in arrangement from those

his paler relations. Within the last few days, September 1869, while watching a fine black cat basking in the sun, I remarked that at particular lights the animal exhibited most plainly the regular brindled markings of the ordinary grey wild, or semi-wild cats; these markings were as black as the rest of his hair or blacker if possible, for he is a beast which any witch or demon might delight in. His owner told me, to my great satisfaction, that the cat's mother was a half-wild grey brindle. *Query.*—As all black panthers show their clusters of spots, have all black cats some such spots or brindled shades as those I have mentioned? If so, and, as we all know, black cats are not a distinct species, are we not to suppose that the more important *betes noires* as friend HAWEYE well terms them, are the offspring of ordinary fawn-colored parents?

NO. 27—THE HUNTING LEOPARD.

Every one who cares about such matters, knows that the hunting leopard runs down its prey by sheer speed as does a greyhound, instead of creeping up to it, as do the panther and all the other cats, but few are aware how wonderfully nature has provided for this style of hunting by giving this beautiful cat a canine foot, that is not damaged in the headlong rush it has to make over a hard and stony plain, in place of the well cushioned paws and deeply concealed talons that allow the rest of the feline tribe to get so noiselessly up to their prey. I do not think that the difference in shape between the only partially retractile and dog-like claw of this cat and the admirably protected talons of the other large varieties of the tribe has been clearly pointed out.

The lithographs attached, are taken from photographs of the claws of very fine specimens of "*F. pardus*," and "*F. jubata*," the last was a very old male, and until I saw him I always

fancied that the head and loins of the hunting leopard in Sir William Harris's beautiful Plates of South African animals, were too small. This specimen was found in a small rocky hill close to my camp—the other was a very dark colored and powerful panther which had killed one man and mortally wounded another in a charge through some beaters who had tried to mob him the day before he was slain.

* agree with Jerdon in disbelieving (*vide* page 116 of his book) the native ideas of the rush being made in one breath, and the paw being held over the horns of the buck.

The leopard always seizes the buck by the throat, after he has knocked the poor animal down and thus naturally holds the head firmly fixed against the ground with the horns as a lever. Without wishing in the least degree to question the wonderful speed of the leopard in his last rush, I think that the buck, just at the end of the run, when he sees all hope is lost, becomes so paralyzed with fear as to be incapable of exerting himself to the utmost. Every one who has an opportunity of seeing a hunting cheetah at work, should for once, at least, take advantage of it, for pursuer and pursued are, when in action, perhaps the most beautiful animals in creation, but the chase (sport it is not) is despicable; fit only for the false and effeminate natives of India.

When on his cart, a hunting leopard is generally in excellent temper, keeping up a constant purr and rubbing himself against any one who is near him much as a tame cat does at meal times. Blyth's term for the cry of the cheetah, page 117 of Jerdon, "a bleat-like mew" reminds me of a sound once heard not to be forgotten and, although well known to sportsmen, not, I think, often mentioned; the call at night of one tiger to another, it is, I think, more like the faint grunting "low" of a cow buffalo to her calf than any other noise I know and yet so distinct, not to say awful, that it is not to be mistaken.

The finest hunting leopard I have ever seen, belonged to the well known Rajah of Chircarry in Bundlekund. The keeper told me that he could run down four black bucks of a morning. I saw him without showing the slightest signs of being fatigued kill two very fine bucks in the Rajah's preserve within a very short space of time. The last gave us what is I suppose in that description of hunting considered a very long run. He had a long start and was on the move when the leopard jumped off the cart on which we, (leopard, the keeper an old Mussalman, and I) were seated, and continued trotting quietly on, thus keeping the leopard who followed at a crouching run, and took, advantage of every bit of cover that could screen him from view, at a pretty sharp canter before he could get close enough perhaps within two hundred yards, to make the final rush, this once commenced the buck was run into with as much rapidity, in certainly less than four hundred yards, as if the leopard had started on better terms. The buck although he was nervous, did not of course see the leopard, or he would have been off at once. His enemy was two or three times inclined to give up the chase, having perhaps lost sight, but was encouraged to go on by a whistle from the old keeper who sat with me on the light cart which a couple of fast bullocks took along at a round trot. Of course this could not have been done except in a preserve where the antelope were very tame and in great numbers.

The leopard certainly was a very beautiful and perfectly gentle creature ; although he did look a rather formidable one when excited by his success and with face, jaws and foreparts literally dropping blood, a wooden bowl of which had been presented to him as a peace-offering when each buck was taken from him to have its throat cut in the orthodox Mussalman fashion, he sat on the cart with his face within a few inches of mine, and each jolt knocked our heads or bodies together. The odd mixture of feline purring and looks with dog-like sporting feeling, docility and manners this particular leopard displayed, astonished me very much. An excellent sportsman and keen observer has reminded me, that in closing with his quarry, a hunting

leopard appears to upset a buck, by hooking and knocking the antelope's feet from under him, or aside with his paw. I think that I have also remarked this cat like blow, but if it be used, the stroke is given with such rapidity that the eye can hardly follow it.

No. 28—HYÆNA.

The most ludicrous instances of animal cowardice I have ever seen have been displayed by hyænas. Once while with two friends beating a hill for hog, a large hyæna broke past us in despair of more noble game we rode at and, after a long and fast run, I had slightly speared the ungainly beast; hardly drawing blood and merely "ruffling the feathers" so to speak, when one of the other horses rolled over with his rider in the black cotton ground we were then crossing, the rider lost his rein, and the Arab, an old Kamptee hog-hunter, picked himself up and forthwith pursued the hyæna, whose abject fear and efforts to escape, as he shuffled along with tail between his legs and quarters more tucked in and drooped than ever, when the noble old horse bit at them, made him look the most miserable creature I have ever seen and a wonderful contrast to the old Arab, who, with ears laid well back and tail aloft, pursued the enemy at a long trot, every now and then trying to get it under one of his fore-feet.

Another case was nearly as illustrative of the faint-heartedness of the animal. Shortly after daybreak, I had shot a bear that died almost immediately; ere long a large hyæna blundered up the same path the bear had taken. I did not wish to waste a shot on him, and he stumbled on for some distance in the vacant-looking and undecided way of his race; suddenly having caught the scent of blood or dead-flesh—he became a different and rather fine-looking creature, as he rushed, with head and tail well up, the latter waving almost in the style of

a foxhound while "drawing" direct to the spot, and in his hungry haste jumped on a stone beside which was the dead bear and almost on the carcass. All at once matters changed, and I shall not soon forget the horror-struck look of the hyæna as stiffened as if by magic, too frightened to move back or forward and with every bristle erect like a worried cat, he stood quivering over the body : although I had spared it before I could not resist taking his worthless life as he stood.

That was a red letter day, one of those that reward an Indian sportsman for his numberless unrecorded blank excursions. Some one says of sport,

"All hits are history,"

"All misses are mystery."

and even to see as little as is recorded in these notes, a man must undergo many a sore trial of mind and body, of temper and of the flesh.

The time was January, the most delightful month every where in India. I left my friends' tents about three o'clock one cold morning and under a beautiful full moon, had a pleasant ride of eight or ten miles to my ground, which I had not long reached, before I got the bear and hyæna just mentioned, both fine specimens ; within a couple of hours after, perhaps much less, I killed two more good bears, both of which gave me some trouble, I then shot my way back to the tents, going for many miles along one of the salt marshes of the upper part of the Northern Circars and getting a large and very diversified bag of small game ; among them, my three first specimens of the flamingo, some red-crested pochards, a very beautiful teal,* which I have never seen before or since, and seeing what I think were specimens of the Scaup pochard too wary to bag however, and winding up when near the tents with an antelope which notwithstanding a ball through his body, gave my Decanee galloway a long and uncommonly fast gallop before the spear-blade was blooded.

* I think that this was the "Clucking teal," *Querquedula glochitans*, No. 966 of Jerdon's birds of India, Vol. 2, page 808. VAGRANT,

Before luncheon I got back to the tents which were furnished with all those luxurious comforts for which Indian Civilians of a few years ago were so famous.

Eheu : it seems only yesterday ; but my dear host, a comrade in many a day's sport, and his young bride who was then with him, have both been dead for some years and their "vagrant" guest has rusted from a young Captain into a battered and weather-beaten Field Officer.

Since these notes went to press, the remark that a hyæna gives a long run before he is speared, not from speed but from the way the brute turns, has been corroborated by an instance in which a hyæna after having been reached and stuck within a few fields gave us a gallop of fully three miles over very bad ground and under a mid-day sun before he was killed.

No. 36—INDIAN FOX.

Foxes are wonderfully quick in taking advantage of ground in their efforts to escape from greyhounds. If a ravine is at right angles to their line, they are almost sure to race direct to it, then to drop into, and run up or down it for some distance, while the dogs having taken it in their stride, are staring helplessly about. I have seen them squat quite flat in any small tuft of grass or bushes that could, for a second, hide them from view of the dogs; and I was once beaten by a tired fox, that deliberately, when I thought I was sure of him, ran into a herd of cattle and sheep and turned among and under them until, having completely fatigued and puzzled the dogs, he was able to run clear away from them; this was one of the red earth foxes just mentioned.

To the assistance of a fox, I owe getting a wounded antelope, which I had lost sight of, as I was following it up. Although I felt certain that it could not be far on, I had just given up the

pursuit, as I was travelling and pressed for time, when I was induced to resume it by seeing a little fox that had for some time been strolling about a rising ground near me, suddenly and without any apparent cause, change its direction, and trot up to a bush into which it stood peering with some interest.

In spite of the hardly suppressed jeers of the palankeen bearers, for by that conveyance was I then journeying, I went up to the spot; and as I expected, turned out and bagged my wounded antelope which gave me an easy shot as it tried to hobble away.

My remark that foxes found on black cotton soil will not give such good runs as those from red earth whereon food is not so easily procured has been corroborated by experience at Kamptee where the ground is, with very few exceptions, black and the foxes, although large and handsome, are run into with ordinary dogs more quickly than at any other station I have been quartered in. They are so harmless and beautiful that it is a sin to kill them: but the wonderful grace and dexterity they bring into play in doubling before and baffling dogs have always been to me so interesting that fox coursing with a brace of greyhounds has been a temptation; I have never tried to resist.

No. 37—THE WHALE TRIBE.

My only sporting experience with these animals was on the Chilka lake, where I put a No. 6 or 2½ oz. ball into the side of a large porpoise that was rolling along close to my canoe. The poor beast appeared very hard hit and probably died, but of course, I did not get him and it was a cruel and wanton shot of which I am ashamed.

No. 40—COMMON STRIPED SQUIRREL.

I cannot pass over an incident, characteristic of this pretty little squirrel and, could it be drawn so as to give an idea of the relative sizes, numbers and noise of the animals concerned, one that would fairly represent "Dignity and impudence."

A few hours ago, (3rd September 1868) at the People's Park in Madras, I was in the enclosure allotted to the Carnivora. Dinner being announced, caused great excitement among the goodly company comprising, I write from memory and may perhaps be wrong in one or two of the junior ranks, but think I am right.

Two Lions—of great beauty.

Two tigers—the finest I have seen in captivity.

Three junior tigers.

Nine panthers—of various degrees of seniority.

A black panther—of Satanic disposition.

A lynx—of almost fabulous merit.

A hyæna—unsettled, gloomy and malignant.

Three or four young bears—unacquainted with sorrow.

An august and, with the exception of the hyæna, aristocratic assembly of the brute creation that should have ensured reverence or respect from a much more important member of it than a palm squirrel.

However in the midst of the proceedings a very small squirrel came quietly forth from the lion's den, where he had probably been drinking from the royal goblet, calmly seated himself on a post in the midst of and overlooking the cages, and from this commanding position scolded or attempted to exceed in noise the entire company.

No. 42—BROWN FLYING SQUIRREL

I saw at Tounghoo in Burma, just after dawn, a flying squirrel take very nearly as long a flight as that mentioned at page 176 of Jerdon, and as there stated, rise slightly at the end of the flight. A brother officer saw one sail over the Prome road, about a mile north of Rangoon, and this flight, as the wood was cleared to some distance from both sides at the time, must have been nearer eighty than sixty yards. I do not remember having heard the voice of this animal. I sent a very fine skin from Rangoon to the Madras Museum.

Flying squirrels are as stated at page 175 of Jerdon, "quite "nocturnal in their habits," therefore although they are, I imagine, to be found wherever there is deep forest they are seldom seen, even by those few who at dusk or dawn visit their haunts, and when seen still more seldom recognised: for until the spectator has become acquainted with this beautiful animal he may easily take for a kite or more probably for some large owl, the shadowy object which he sees for a moment only, perhaps at a distance of eighty or a hundred yards, sailing silently from the upper branches of some thickly foliated and very lofty tree towards a lower one, and scarcely visible through the dim morning light and deep forest shade.

A friend writes thus with reference to my notes on the flying squirrel—

" When I was in charge of the Annamullay forests some
" brown flying squirrels inhabited the large forest trees fronting
" my hut: and I used often to see them just before dark, pass
" across the opening. They would ascend to the topmost branch
" spring off it and slowly *float* down to near the bottom of the
" tree on the opposite side of the opening. This was the posi-
" tion of the squirrel in its flight, and I noticed particularly
" that just as it approached the tree it made a slight curve up-
" wards as mentioned by Jerdon; some of these flights were at

"least 60 yards from *tree to tree*." A cleverly drawn sketch by the accomplished sportsman whose words I have just quoted represents a flying squirrel floating down supported by his extended parachute and with his head and forepaws up, standing so to speak, in the air, on his hind legs, if not in an erect position at least at an angle of 50. This would also be my evidence regarding the position of the creature during flight. If I mistake not, however, the usually conceived idea is that the flying squirrel precipitates itself headlong, "*takes a header*" in fact, at exactly the opposite angle.

NO. 54—INDIAN WILD BOAR.

Hog-hunting has been described *ad nauseam*; but one must see to realize the courage of this glorious animal. I saw a very fine boar, that had every chance of saving his life; for he was unwounded, on bad ground and within, at most, sixty yards of a rocky and wooded hill, which had been his point throughout a long run, turn on the foremost rider, whose horse swerving, caused the coveted "*first blood*" to be missed, although the man was generally sure with hand or eye, one of

"The Scots who rein a mettled steed"

"And love to couch a spear."

The hog then charged the second horseman who happened to be my servant with a spare spear, getting, to my horror, under the horse, a very valuable Arab, that jumped over the boar and kicked him hard in the ribs; the rider, a Mussalman, swearing freely, but not using the weapon. The distance to the boar's haven, was by this time so much diminished that to reach it, he had only to cross a narrow cart track up which I was coming at best speed. Seeing me, he turned at right angles and charged home, as only a hog can and as few horses without pure blood can be trusted to stand, springing almost off the ground and cutting my mare on the stifle in his rush on the

spear. I do not know any other *unwounded* animal, that would thus have gone out of the way to meet his death in an encounter with three mounted men one after the other.

Although the heads of the Burmah hogs shown to me by Mr. Blyth, were certainly smaller than those of India, the animals I have seen in Upper Pegu (I do not know anything about Tenasserim) appeared to me to be about the same size as those I had seen in former hunting days. The Burmah hog has certainly as much courage as his Indian relations, and I have seen men with very severe wounds, inflicted by these animals. While after large game amongst the Yomah range of hills, west of Tounghoo, I was on one occasion faced by a fine boar with very large tusks, that disputed possession of a ravine with me, covering the retreat of his zenana, and offering me fair battle so gallantly, that at one time I thought I should have been obliged to shoot him in self-defence.

I have long been of opinion that there should be magnificent hog-hunting in Lower Burmah, and predicted that ere many years, when horses have become more plentiful, and means of communication better, many a first spear will be won, over the grassy plains of that country. It will be interesting to know whether the long spear of Madras and Bombay, or the short jobbing one of Bengal will come into fashion over the new ground. It may be narrow-minded prejudice on my part, but I confess that my sympathy will be with the men who use the long weapon.

No. 55—CAMELS.

As camels are entirely domesticated, Jerdon has only indicated their position among ruminating animals; but, as these notes are not in any way scientific productions, I trust I may be allowed, to say what I know of these valuable slaves; for they certainly are nothing more: charming hacks and excellent

beasts of burden though they be, I do not think that any education or coaxing could elevate them to the higher ranks as friends, comrades, sporting companions and playfellows of man as are so many of his pleasant acquaintances among the brute creation.

Like many human beings, camels get credit for good qualities which they do not possess; for example, patience is popularly supposed to be one of their virtues. Now I do not know a more discontented fidgetty, ill behaved animal than a camel when being detailed for duty.

Some Indian traveller, if I mistake not. Russell, of the "*thin red line*" fame gives an excellent description of the objections raised by baggage camels to being laden, but the impatience of one of these is trifling to that shown by many of the highly-bred and light animals, kept solely for saddle-work; most of which are really very beautiful, game and blood-looking creatures in appearance as different from a baggage camel as is a thorough-bred from a dray horse. Unless a saddle camel is very well broken, the moment the rider's foot is in the stirrup ^{up} springs the camel, hind quarters first, so that, as the beast's knees are still on the ground, the rider is shot well forward to be the next moment as rapidly jerked back as the fore-legs are brought into play; then probably the beast makes a bolt for a hundred yards or so, perfectly regardless of the reins, or whatever may be the proper term for the tiller rope like guiding strings attached to the wooden studs let into his nostrils. Then they give themselves as many airs, and they are as fanciful about the particular objects they elect to shy at, or to object to, as many horses and to make one go pleasantly, a light hand is even of more consequence than in horsemanship, for these beasts have as many peculiarities of tender or hard nostril as a horse has of mouth. This however once understood; I do not know a more pleasant hack, or one of greater service to a sportsman than a well broken riding camel, one that will sit quietly while

being mounted and will not pull. The exertion, so often spoken about, of camelmanship, if there be such a word, is only imaginary; the rider has only to sit as loosely as possible—that is not to grip the saddle and to give his arms, legs and body any play that will prevent their resisting the motion of the huge animal; to sit native like in fact, “*all legs and wings*”—this once accomplished he may ride for hours and for days together without feeling fatigued. Some of the pleasantest days I have ever passed, were spent in Bundlecund, while marching in January, the coldest time of the year, from Saugor to Futtahpore, when sometimes my only companions from dawn to dusk would be my riding camel and a retriever. If I wanted to shoot, I had only to dismount and fasten the camel to some “acacia” or “mimosa,” or whatever the proper term for the tree may be, on which, regardless of thorns, she grazed contentedly until my return—when she would without a murmur obey the order to “sit down” and allow guns or game to be packed on her. Her only failings were an objection to country carts, which in a narrow road caused a constant application of the hunting-spur to her shoulders with a trial of temper to her rider, and a dislike to dogs at which she used to kick or strike most violently. Free use on my part of stick and spur, however overcame her dislike to my retriever, and I have often been much amused when in passing through some walled Bundlecund village, he gave chase to a dog to be, in his turn, hunted back by a pack of the pariah’s relations. He knew to a yard where support was to be found and always ran between the legs of the camel who, fearing her rider, merely winced at him, waiting to punish the first pursuer who was pretty sure to be caught, amongst her long legs and, with jerks very trying to the rider, sent forward with her hind and backward with her forefeet, so violently that, if not crippled for life, he gave up the chase at once.

A camel must be a very tender-skinned animal, for the slightest prick with a hunting spur, will cause blood to spring from the shoulder, the place where the rider’s heels naturally

come to This enforced acknowledgment of the rank of my dog was the only act of intelligence I have ever known any camel display. Much as we were together, I could never get the one I have just mentioned to feed from my hand, an expression of confidence in me that I have gained from every animal I have tried to be on good terms with, except all the camels I have ever been acquainted with, some members of a herd of Burman buffaloes I possessed at Tounghoo and "Evangeline" a wild dog.*

The most ridiculous instance of this impatience of camels I have ever seen, was at an inspection of that well known Regiment Ross' Camel Corps, by a General on whom I was in attendance as a Staff officer.

The corps consisting, if I remember right, of four troops of one hundred men each, two of British soldiers picked, I believe principally from the Rifle Brigade and two of Seikhs, the most warlike race in India, was a sight to gladden the eye of any man proud of being a soldier. They were drawn up in column and dismounted, with their four hundred camels also in column of troops seated, each animal with its driver, about one hundred yards to a flank.

The ordinary Infantry inspection being over, the men were ordered to file to their camels, which up to this time had been sitting most demurely and to all appearance quite unconscious of what was to take place; as the men approached, each camel pricked up its head in great excitement, and looked most ludicrously like a gigantic turkey.

The men having taken post and "*Prepare to mount*," being ordered, the anxiety of the animals increased fifty-fold, and almost every one of the four hundred commenced that wonderful and horrible turkey-like gobble, all camels delight in, the uproar increased at the word "*Mount*" and continued until the

* Evangeline lived in captivity for four years and remained a perfect savage until the last.

Commandant on seeing every man in his place, ordered the "*Rise*," when in a second every animal returned to its normal state of quiet.

Although these are merely notes on Natural History, I trust that I may be excused, remarking that the corps I saw that morning came nearer to my *beau idéal* for soldiers on service than any I have seen before or since.

I cannot pass over a remarkable instance which occurred that morning, of what every sportsman must have observed in one way or another; color in dress of men, animals and ground almost perfectly corresponding with each other.

The time was during the mutiny, and the Division was in the field; the "*camels*" had just joined our force from, I think, Agra, but for some reason, now forgotten, had been halted some miles from, instead of with, our camp. The following morning the General Commanding the Division, rode out to look at them, his staff of course being in attendance. Beyond the general direction, we did not know where the Corps was encamped and, on reaching a part of the plain from which we expected to see them, we fancied we had made a mistake in our ground, as not a camel was visible. Suddenly I caught sight of them, drawn up as before mentioned, but the four hundred soldiers in their "*kakee*" or dust-colored clothing and the same number of camels in their dusty, sandy or russet grey clothing, seated quietly on the plain, were all so much the color of the bare red plain on which they were posted and of some small hill behind them, that it was almost impossible at the distance of half a mile or eight hundred yards to tell what was there.

No. 58—THE SAMBER.

I can corroborate Jerdon's statement at page 259, that "the clattering of a herd of samber over the stones may often be heard for some distance before they come into view." I mean of course only when the animals are alarmed for at other times

they can move as silently as any other wild creature. The Gonds, I believe, have an idea that, while moving on the tops of hills, samber kick small stones over the sides in order that the noise may frighten any tiger that may be below,

I do not know any wild animal that takes so much killing as this deer, this is well pointed out in the "Old Forest Ranger" by Colonel Campbell, whose book must not be confounded with the "Old Shikarry" by a different writer. I once put two and a brother sportsman three, if not four bullets, from 14 and 12 bores and all well placed into a large stag that ran for at least three miles, before the trackers, Orissa foresters well up to the work, could account for him.

Is there any truth in the ancient prejudices *pro* and *con*, the effect of hart's horn? The old adage running, I think thus, but I quote from memory only,

"If thou be hurt with horn of stag, it brings thee to thy bier,

"But barber's hand shall boar's hurt heal, thereof have thou no fear."

is to a greater or less extent believed in, I know, by many native hunters.

How far there is truth in the notion it is not for this writer to guess, but he can say, that he who has, with a hunting knife, to put out of pain a large wounded stag, let him be samber or spotted deer, or even a bull nilgai, or a buck antelope, has a task, which requires nerve and activity, a ready hand with the weapon and a quick eye to guide the blow.

The native hunter's notion is, as was ours, that, there is some peculiar venom for man or dog, in a deer's horn, but I fancy, that so formidable a weapon as the antler (it is with the basal antler, I think, that the wound is generally given) wielded in terror, or desperation by one of the most muscular and active animals of the forest would, under any circumstances, inflict more severe hurt than would a boar's tusk; added to this should be taken into consideration the sledge-hammer-like

blows given by the fore-feet of a deer, sufficient in themselves to cause death by breaking ribs and inflicting internal bruises which may, when the stab of the horn is noticed, escape observation. All the deer tribe whether male or female can, according to their size, deal blows with their fore-feet with great force and precision.

After HAWKEYE's any further account by me will read with terrible flatness : but, as I am on the spot and, to some extent in all the excitement of the "*poetry of sport*," my friend so well describes, I am tempted to tell what happened to me late this afternoon.

I am in the "Avalanche" bungalow on the Neilgherries, a spot stated by Jerdon, at page 289 of his book, to be an especial haunt of the Neilgherry wild goat, or ibex of Madras sportsmen. This bungalow is situated amongst the Koondas mentioned by Colonel Campbell in his "Old Forest Ranger" and "Indian Journal," and is known to most of the visitors to Ootacamund.

Late this afternoon, while I was stalking (*the poetry of sport*) for deer among these hills, I saw a small herd of samber, consisting of a magnificent stag, a smaller one, probably the "*jag*" referred to by my friend HAWKEYE, and a hind feeding near the foot of the high ibex cliffs on the lofty hill, about three miles to the "*half left*" as one stands facing from this bungalow; many a Madras sportsman must know the view.

I watched them for some time, perhaps three-quarters of an hour, until they were on ground on which they could be approached, and during this time saw, through the glass, a very amusing scene. Some herb, or perhaps, as far as I could see, some salt or soda which made them lick the spot attracted the hind who skipped up to it in a most playful manner, followed in the same way by the younger stag. The senior followed slowly and with great gravity first "*dunted*" (I know no

word so expressive as that old Scotch one for the performance) the hind very ungallantly out of his way, and then turned his horns upon his junior who "stood up" to him for some time most bravely, but of course without success, although the joust lasted long enough to be a very interesting one and the entire picture of deer, rocky back ground, mountain scenery and mountain mist was fully worthy of Landseer's pencil.

The result of the stalk which followed was, that I got up to within a long shot of the herd, by that time joined by another hind, and broke the shoulder of the larger stag, who however managed to stumble down into a large "Sholah," as the hanging woods of these hills are termed by sportsmen, in which as dusk came on and being lost at night among the Koonda mountains, or any part of the Neilgherry hills, is no light matter, I had to leave him and out of which I fear I shall never get him.* A curious instance of what may have been conjugal affection, or perhaps the "feminine curiosity" mentioned by my friend HAWKEYE, happened just after my shot. Being beaten by the tremendous hill, and out of wind after a residence on the plains my hand shook, so that I missed with my first barrel and thus sent the herd galloping wildly along the hill side; the second shot however brought the big stag down on his head and knees, when he picked himself up finding that, in his crippled state, he could not get up-hill, the poor animal turned and staggered down to the wood beneath him, one of the hinds seeing her lord thus pull up, stopped herself and watched him, what were her reasons for this, I cannot imagine.

"Verily," as the "Old Forest Ranger" says, "there is no more gallant beast than a Neilgherry stag," and of all the boons that men should be ever thankful for, there are none greater than good health and good eyesight, so bountifully granted to many

* I never saw him again; he got during the night into a still deeper and larger wood in which he probably fell a prey to a tiger. I saw and wounded a tiger near the spot next day.—VAGRANT.

and so little thought of with gratitude to the Bestower. I cannot think of any pleasure to exceed that of stalking for samber or ibex among the Koonda mountains, the climate and the scenery repay the sportsman even although he may not get blood, but assuredly he who follows this sport must not only have the eyes of a hawk, but own also legs tough as steel and lungs like those of a Highland piper.

The loud and somewhat metallic sounding bellow of a samber stag can often be heard, for an almost incredible distance, reverberating among the almost silent solitudes in which he generally dwells. Of course in forest one cannot judge with any degree of accuracy where the spot is from which such a sound proceeds : but, when I have been out in an open moor, I have heard a stag roaring on a hill at least a mile from me. The clear air of the mountains may have carried this challenge further than it would have travelled in the plains and, although I did not remark it at the time, the wind was probably from him to me, and there was not any other sound, except perhaps the song of a sky-lark, to divert my attention. The call of the hind is a faint grunting "low."

I have heard these calls both by day and at night, but there is another cry ; a sharp and ringing snort, or signal of alarm which has even a still more metallic clang than the bellow of the stag and which I have never heard except after sunset. It is, I fancy, used by both sexes ; and the native hunters affirm that, it is only uttered when the deer know that a tiger is near them. A few days ago I attempted to combat this notion, as a samber, which was, I suppose, feeding near the edge of a copse on hearing my gun carrier and me returning home just after dusk, uttered this cry and then crashed into cover. My man was however firm in adhering to his opinion ; he reminded me and with truth, that we had only half an hour before heard a tigress and her cub calling to each other not far from the spot and said, perhaps with some reason, that this deer had been

made nervous by hearing these, to it of course, most awful sounds and, without waiting to look at us, had jumped to the conclusion that we were tigers and had given an alarm accordingly. He added, as an apology for this mistake on the part of the deer, that it was probably a young hind which had not yet had a fawn; concluding very ungallantly however with a remark that, under such circumstances a deer is like a young woman, therefore not likely to form a correct judgment on things in general.

They are good men and true, after their savage fashion; most of these native hunters; their open-air-life and habits of observation and self-reliance cause them, no matter what may be their race or origin, to become far more manly, plain-spoken and independent than any other Easterns I have ever met. And if they gain confidence in, or take a fancy to an employer who can understand what they say, they are not only instructive but most entertaining companions while going to and fro the sporting ground, once there and "*on duty*," so to speak, talking is of course out of the question. They are from necessity and training, keen observers of nature, and their wild life probably makes them superstitious, and although they are generally far more silent than other natives, when drawn out they are able to give information most interesting to a naturalist regarding the habits of bird or beast, and able to tell many a quaint and distorted legend of devilry or witchcraft, or many a grim tale of horror connected with deeds of by-gone days, or of the gang robberies, murders and torture of the present.

I own that I have passed many a pleasant moment in talking to these men and have a great regard for them, often for the same idle reasons that Lord Marmion loved "*palmers*" for like:—

“*such holy ramblers still
 “They know to charm a weary hill,
 “With song, romance or lay;
 “Some jovial tale, or glee, or jest,
 “Some lying legend at the least,
 “They bring to cheer the way.”

At any rate, if they are not always ready with "song romance or lay," they are seldom at a loss for the last of the accomplishments Marmion set such store by.

My experience on the Neilgherry Hills leads me to agree with HAWKEYE that the flesh of the samber, if kept sufficiently long, is excellent.

Unless one has been on the happy hunting grounds, he writes of, it is impossible to appreciate his minute and thoroughly correct description; let me however corroborate it. My most difficult stalking has been to avoid, not to kill, the "*fag*," or the hinds he tells us of on one occasion I had to spend a most interesting but uncomfortable hour while a hind and calf snugly reposed in a warm sheltered nook within 50 yards of my bitterly cold position. They had evidently been alarmed by some forest foe, probably a tiger or wild dog, but were luckily looking in the opposite direction when I turned the angle of a hill close to them. The wind was in my favor, but they completely barred my movements, for if they had been startled they would have spread the alarming tidings through their relations. Dropping on the ground, I had only to watch and wait, after some time the young one easily satisfied laid down, but his more wary mother continued to stand and gaze long and anxiously at the opposite hill-side, and even when she did at last follow his example, her eyes and ears were kept so keenly on the alert that I dared not move and, while watching her, had the bitter disappointment of seeing a very handsome stag returning to his lair in the wood through the very gorge she thus cut me off from. Although foreign to the subject, one of those strikingly interesting pictures by nature which few but sportsmen can ever witness, may be here mentioned. While lazily watching the hind and calf through my glass, there were, besides these deer, at one time in the field of the instrument three or four of the handsome grey jungle fowl of Southern India, "*Gallus Sonneratii*" and one of the fine

Neilgherry black monkeys or "*Langurs*" page 167. All when taken with the magnificent hill scenery and brilliantly tinted woodlands of the Neilgherries combining to make as good a subject for brush or pencil as any artist need wish for.

I returned in the evening and had the satisfaction of seeing the stag stealing, with all the precautions told by HAWKEYE out of the opposite side of the wood he entered in the morning. By taking due advantage of the wood however and stalking with more than ordinary patience, I managed to put a deadly bullet through his brawny and well-maned neck which was the only part exposed as he stood, among brushwood, long grass and rocks, sniffing the breeze and listening to the distant shouting of some herdsmen in the glen far beneath us.

In opposition to the remarks at page 241, the following extract from a letter by a far better sportsman in general and deer-stalker in particular than the author of these notes and often quoted in them is given:—

"I don't agree with you when you state that the stag " 'roars' and the hind 'lows' ; you cannot call that deep bark of " a samber stag a 'roar' on the *sharper* one of the hind a 'low,' " much less 'a faint grunting low.' "

It is always difficult to describe sound by words ; but in defence of the word below, I can only bring forward HAWKEYE at page 96, some of our old writers, and last not least, Scott, who says, *vide* "Marmion" Canto IV, verse xv.

"The wild buck *bells* from ferny brake."*

*Bell—Bellow—Low.

No. 61—RIB-FACED OR BARKING DEER OR MUNTJAC.

Jerdon says, page 265, that it is "easily stalked," but I beg leave to differ with him in this respect, and record my corroboration of HAWKEYE's idea that it is "decidedly difficult to stalk in the open." HAWKEYE's description of the dainty and wary manner in which in stepping, it lifts each leg above the grass or leaves and so moves noiselessly is excellent, and like all his writing, evidently drawn from the life and from personal observation.

I have this morning (Neilgherries, 5th February 1869) watched with much interest the wary manœuvres of a buck muntjac which appeared in an open spot on a hill lower than the one where I sat looking out for a sambar stag. The little creature was out of shot, and as far as I could judge in perfect safety, yet it is impossible for me to describe the excessive caution which he moved; always before shifting his position, watching most anxiously with eyes and ears for the slightest sign of an enemy and again after, apparently in play skipping a few paces, stopping and then stealing on timidly and noiselessly. Suddenly he turned and fled for his very life to the covert whence he came. The wind was from him to me, so that I knew I was not the cause of alarm and for some time could not account for it. At last I remembered that my horsekeeper had; nearly an hour before, led my pony across that hill-side. The morning, in hunting parlance was a bad scenting one, and over that dry and open hill-side came a strong and keen nor-easterly wind that should very soon have carried off all taint of man or pony, yet the pretty little deer caught the faint scent that could have remained with a rapidity marvellous to any one who has seen hounds puzzled.

No. 63—THE NILGAI.

A wounded blue bull at bay is a very fine-looking animal one that should be approached with some caution, for at a time he will charge home very gallantly at either man

or dog and, like all others of the deer tribe he can when so inclined, make excellent use of his forefeet as well as of his horns. I remember a notable instance of this: in a large bull, whose foreleg I had broken just below the shoulder. Notwithstanding his wound however, he got away so fast, that I do not think I should ever have seen him again, had not a large red pariah dog, with sporting instincts most unlike those natural to his ignoble race, joined in the pursuit and brought the bull to bay. When I came up the scene was one worthy of Landseer. A large blue bull is at all times a fine looking animal, and this one looked very formidable as, mad with rage and pain, with head lowered and tail erect, he made frantic charges at his adversary, and notwithstanding the crippled limb which was hanging useless at his side attempted to crush the dog with his remaining forefoot by rearing up and trying to drop on him. I was too much out of breath after a long run under a noon-day Indian sun to fire with effect, so I had to watch the scene at a distance until I recovered breath. I then incautiously attempted to cheer on the dog, but the pariah who had never seen a white face before, or perhaps disgusted with my interference declined to assist me further and allowed the bull to give me another run as severe as at first before I got to him again.

NO. 67—INDIAN ANTELOPE.

I can corroborate Mr. Elliot's statements as to antelope, showing ingenuity in avoiding danger and concealing their fawns, page 277 of Jerdon. Once being very well-mounted, on an undeniable Arab, that before and after won several very good races, I rode down a fairly sized fawn. When close to and fast gaining on my quarry, over ground open and hard, I must have taken my eye off the chase for a moment, probably to look at the future line of country. Suddenly and unaccountably the fawn disappeared as if by magic, for nowhere near was there sufficient

cover to conceal a hare. Fairly puzzled, I pulled up on a small rising ground on which I had last seen the fawn a few lengths in my front, and looked in all directions until I was about to give up the chase in despair, when the horse snorting and pricking his ears, attracted my attention to the poor little animal, that with ears and head laid close to the ground, was, just under the Arab's nose, squatted in a hollow so very shallow, that he could not have concealed himself, had he not thus laid his ears flat. This tale is to me a difficult one to tell, and therefore clumsily related, but when pace and ground, pursued and pursuer are taken into consideration, the working of instinct which pointed out the slight vantage ground, a hollow hardly deep enough to conceal half his little body and probably the only shelter near him, and caused the fawn to avail himself of it, must have been instantaneous. Again, at one of the afternoon open air receptions at Government House in Madras: in the midst of visitors, croquet players, bandsmen, &c., I found a very young fawn squatting in the same way on the lawn, so still, that some ladies to whom I showed it, would not believe it was alive, until it was put off its "form," when it went away at speed. The little creature must have been concealed by the mother when she went to feed, probably just before the reception commenced, and both she and it were biding their time until the guests dispersed.

Some of the best runs with a spear I have ever had, have been after wounded antelope; and I do not know any termination to a successful shot more satisfactory than a gallop of this kind. I have, like Jerdon, page 278, when trying to spear a wounded buck known one, with a broken foreleg, "give a run of three miles before he was overhauled, and that on tolerably good ground." I was once too, when riding a very well-bred Arab, famous for his *staying* powers, fairly, and indeed ignominiously, beaten by a doe, which I thought was going to fall an easy prey, and which I had wounded the day before, when my bullet, after having struck her, killed another doe beyond.

The one I fired at, however escaped. The following morning, I came on her again; so lame and crippled did she then appear, as she got up out of a cotton field and slowly hobbled away, that I disdained to fire at her and called for my horse and spear. The wounded muscles must however have been set right as she warmed with exercise, for although I got away on excellent terms with her—she improved the pace as she went until she fairly ran "Puzzle," for so was the horse named, to a standstill. The ground in this instance was bad, but still had it not been so, I do not think I could have speared her.

At the risk of the story being set down as an Indian traveller's tale, I must relate how with one ball from a 14-smoothbore I broke *three* legs of an unhappy buck antelope.

On the same trip mentioned in the notes on the fox, at page 228 my palankeen, or rather the light litter I used as a substitute for that conveyance, was one morning, just before dawn, set down by the bearers, who said that they had been so much exhausted by the last stage, which had been a muddy one, that they really could not go further, and that I must send to the nearest village for extra men: meaning thereby that I should promise them a reward if they would consent to go on at once. This I would not do, for the litter, kit and occupant included were far less than the weight of most empty palankeens; so telling them to rest for an hour, I took my gun and strolled towards a small lake which I knew was near. As is the custom with most sportsmen, I must have been moving noiselessly, for on the grey misty curtain which often hangs over a lake at night, being suddenly dissolved by the first sun light, I found myself almost in the centre of a herd of antelope. Several does each more ghost-like than the other, sprung up from the smooth short grass on which they had been resting close to the water's edge and, with their large ears erected, gazed silently at the intruder on their slumbers. Presently a fine black buck followed their example and stood, about sixty yards off, facing me.

I fired at his chest, missing that, but breaking a foreleg just below it with the ball which then passed through the hinder leg on the same side and smashed it close to the hock, the bullet then glanced into and broke the other hind limb, which must have been lazily stretched back as the buck, roused from his sleep, stood staring at me.

The news of my success at once magically refreshed my bearers, who, delighted at the prospect of venison, without complaint or demur, or waiting any suggestions from me, forthwith detailed two of their party to bring on the buck, while the diminished number taking up their load, jogged cheerfully on to their proper halting place.

On that occasion I was getting over, by night and day stages, and as fast as I could, a long journey of about seven hundred miles from Russelcondah in Goomsoor, to Rajahmundry on the banks of the Godavery river, and back again; therefore in that part of the country where every husbandman, shepherd, or fisherman is also a palankeen bearer, travelling in any conveyance of that kind was a legitimate and not unsportsmanlike proceeding; but to me there have been few greater pleasures than getting over long distances in the saddle.

Jerdon it as usual correct, when he says that greyhounds get savage over an antelope that has been pulled down. A short time ago one of my dogs although perfectly gentle at other times and submissive to reason during the worry of jackal or fox, got so excited over a wounded gazelle they had run into that she flew at my face and, had not my stick upset her, would probably have left on it a lasting mark of that morning's sport.

No. 68.—INDIAN GAZELLE.

This beautiful little gazelle often attracts attention or makes its presence known by the peculiar hiss and stamp, of the foot, mentioned by Mr. Elliot. From their color and the rocky, barren ground they frequent generally, they are more difficult to see than the common antelope; and were it not for this noise, they would often escape observation. In the heat of the day they are often to be turned like hares out of long grass, or from under small bushes; and as they then get up very close a charge of shot, or an Ely's cartridge stops them easily. I fancy that they are occasionally killed by jackals; for, one afternoon near Saugor, while coursing with two friends we watched, for a long time, four jackals evidently trying to force one of a small herd of young bucks to separate from the rest. The gazelles stood in a circle and maintained their ground well, by keeping their heads very gallantly outwards to their foes, until at length seeing us, both sides made off. We laid the greyhounds into and killed one of the jackals.

It was an interesting sight, for the jackals displayed a good deal of cunning, two kept themselves in reserve and together while the others pretended to gambol round the outer edge of the circle evidently trying to coax one of the young bucks into charging out of it. The gazelles stamped and snorted and seemed much inclined to fight and probably, had we not been seen, one of them would have done so; of course only to fall a victim to his rashness. In a trial of speed the jackals would not have had a chance.

The name of "Goat Antelope" given to this gazelle by our Madras sportsmen gives, I think, a better idea of its shape than "ravine deer." The animal from its general appearance and peculiar tail is by no means unlike a half-grown goat. Why naturalists should have termed, No. 227 of Jerdon, page 274, the four-horned antelope "*Chickara*," I cannot imagine, for I

have never heard that name applied to any animal but this gazelle; unless the word be a misreading, or a misprint for the Hindoostani term "*chow singha*" or "*chouka*" four-horned, which some Indian sportsmen may have intended to represent the four-horned antelope, but which in writing and perhaps in the confusion of names between "Jungle Sheep," for the four-horned antelope and "Goat Antelope," for the gazelle may have led even so excellent an authority as Hardwicke, astray in his nomenclature in this instance.

Great confusion is often caused by Indian sportsmen, and others using native terms, after most liberal notions of orthography and pronunciation, while writing or speaking of animals that have well defined names in natural history.

We have no more right to call an Indian animal by his local name, which may vary, it must be remembered, with almost every district, instead of employing that by which he may be designated in any work on natural history, than we should have, while writing to a foreigner an account of a run with fox-hounds, to use the Scotch instead of the English word for the animal they were in pursuit of.

NO. 70—IBEX OF MADRAS SPORTSMEN.

Not only does the panther, or, as HAWKEYE terms him, the leopard, commit sad havoc among ibex, but his royal relative the tiger sometimes does so also. A few months ago, *i. e.*, in November 1868, I was stalking over one of the best known ridges on the Koondahs; there were fresh signs of ibex apparent, both to eye and nostril, but not a head could be seen. HAWKEYE's remark on the strong scent attending the ibex is, like all that he writes regarding field sports and game, perfectly correct, for

this must often guide the prowling panther to his prey, the odour that hangs about a rock on which an old "saddle-back" has been sunning himself at the edge of a cliff, while he is looking down on the low-lands, hundreds of feet, in sheer fall below him, is at times far too strong to be pleasant, and the rocks on which a herd have been playing or resting smell like a stable in which goats have been kept. These last signs and others we came across, but not an ibex could be seen. We had that morning close to the place, come on the foot-prints of a large tiger that had evidently kept to the same path we followed, and crossed some of the lovely running streams of the Koondahs at the same spots that we did. My gun-carrier had just whispered to me, in despair, that the ibex must have seen this tiger and bolted into the low country when some marks of blood and hair on the grass, a few feet in front of us attracted his attention, just beside them we found, very little damaged, the body of a very fine doe ibex, probably the sentinel of the herd, which, while resting, on the very edge of a cliff and looking out below, had been crept upon by her noiseless foe from above and caught, as a cat would capture a sparrow. That a tiger, and a large one too, was in this case the aggressor, there could not be a demur, but although there was very little doubt that he would return ere sunset to finish his repast, he had only eaten a part of one hind quarter, I could not afford time to wait for him as I had to return the following morning to Ootacamund en route to the plains, so contented myself with the head. I do not think that he ever did return however, for on my next visit to the Koondahs, in the following February, I found the bones nearly perfect, which would not have been the case had he finished his meal. Being on the very edge of a precipice, on which they could not have expected to find much to eat, the dainty dish had escaped the notice of even such keen-foragers as the wild dog, or jackal.

No. 71—THE GAUR, BISON OF MADRAS SPORTSMEN.

Mighty as is this magnificent animal and headlong as is his rush when he crashes through forest after being alarmed—he can, like all other wild creatures, creep very silently through cover when he pleases. I was on a party of, I think, seven brother officers who were posted at the edge of a wood, into which beaters had been turned. The instant the drive commenced, a solitary bull bison made his way silently past three of us, of whom, to my shame be it said, I was the first, before he was discovered. Then and on being wounded, he broke through the forest with a most startling crash, bearing down in his agony all obstacles as if they were grass; amongst others, sweeping low, in his blind and furious rush, a couple of stout saplings, each thicker than a man's arm and high in proportion, of the strong close-grained and heavy "*saul*" tree, "*shorea robusta*," is, I believe, the scientific name, literally, as we could see from the marks of his blood on the stems, by running them down. We afterwards found that he must have remained for some time watching me from a thick clump of bamboos within a few yards 20 at most, of the spot where I was standing. I then remembered that, just as the beat commenced, I had heard some animal in these bamboos, but as I thought from the snort it gave, it was only some wild pig, I did not even look towards them, as I was eagerly watching the hill-side for more important game. Out of that hill and, I think, the same afternoon, in one beat we turned a herd of bison, a tiger, and two or three bears.

No men have more opportunities than have sportsmen, of observing the wonderful goodness of the Creator in placing "every living creature that moveth after his kind" upon ground where the animal cannot be readily seen and where natural aids are always present for the concealment necessary either to protect the weak antelope, or squirrel from foes, or to enable the tiger to procure his prey.

Every Indian sportsman must have observed how completely the yellowish fawn-color of the antelope, or the gazelle assimilates with that of the dusty, sun-burnt plains on which they are generally found, and how difficult it is to see a doe when, she is gazing and offering, what a friend of mine terms the "*knife-shot*," that is standing end on facing the spectator and giving him almost as puzzling a target at a one hundred yards, as if he were about to try the Yankee feat of attempting, at twenty to split a bullet on the edge of a knife.

Or, he can probably remember how easily the large hill squirrels, animals as large as a cat, can conceal themselves on branches almost perfectly bare of leaves.

Or, how black volcanic rocks, or deep shadows match the dusky coat of a bear; or, how closely the light and shade caused by the sun falling through bushes and on dead leaves, lichen tinted rocks or stumps correspond with the colors of the tiger or leopard; or, how difficult it is to see even a mighty stag grazing on a grey mountain side, or, to take a much more humble and familiar instance, even when now one knows that a flock of green pigeons (*treronidæ*) are in a certain tree, and the birds may be heard, or their *shadows* seen, as they flit among the branches, how nearly impossible it is to mark one of their bodies.

Those who only think of elephants as they have seen the domesticated giants working at any of the innumerable tasks on which these almost reasoning slaves may be employed, can hardly imagine how puzzling a matter it is to see them distinctly among the dark shadows and irregular outlines that fill up any portion of a landscape in their forest haunts. I can only say, that with a experienced and well-taught attendant, who had been originally trained by Colonel Henry Shakespear, the well-known author of the "*Wild sports of India*," I was once, for some moments, which almost seemed to be hours, waiting in long

grass and reeds within a few feet (*not yards*) of the head of a very fine elephant without being able to get a satisfactory shot at him; or even to see more than an indistinct dusky outline of form, or a dark shadow as his trunk was raised aloft when the mighty beast, a magnificent tusker, suspected that he scented mischief. Having at length made sure that there was something uncanny near him, he uttered a shrill scream and wheeled right round on the very spot on which he stood, and, without exposing any more vulnerable target than his enormous hind-quarters, at which it would have been wicked and wanton cruelty to shoot, rushed down hill, followed by his family, eight or ten unwieldy wives and sturdy children, whose progress as they crashed through the dense wood and undergrowth of long grass, caused a noise sufficient to startle any one whose nerves were not tightly braced and which my pen certainly is too weak to describe. Having once found the herd it was easy enough, as the wind was favorable, to get up to the animals; for we were guided by the noise they made while feeding, but it was simply impossible to see him until they fled. A large female who was standing, apparently asleep and close to the mighty "*tusker*," might however have been very easily shot had he not offered a more tempting bait.

No. 73.-PANGOLIN OR SCALY ANT-EATER.

The man-eating tiger mentioned in page 214, had in his stomach, a large piece of the scaly hide of this manis, the indigestible delicacy was probably to him not more trying than truffles would to his slayer.

While I was in Rangoon I had a manis in captivity for several weeks; it had been caught close to my house in a common wire cage rat-trap, into which it certainly must have had considerable difficulty in forcing its long body and tail, but which it probably entered to eat the ants or other insects which might have been attracted by the bait.

It appeared to sleep all day, rolled up with the head between the forelegs, and the long broad tail folded over the ball it thus made so firmly as to require a considerable effort on the part of any one who wished to uncoil it, a liberty which it never resented further than by uttering a faint hiss: when touched while moving about at night, at which time, like Mr. Elliot's specimen, it was very restless, it always assumed the position I have just described, which is doubtless one of defence and one which I do not think that any of the smaller beasts of prey, jackals, or chaus cats for example, would be able to force.

Although I had it most carefully watched for this purpose, neither any of my servants, nor I, ever saw this creature eat anything; it would however drink freely at almost any hour, in the manner described by Mr. Elliot, lapping the water that was offered to it by rapidly darting out its long extensile tongue. I have no doubt however, it fed at night on white-ants, quantities of which, with their earth and cells, I caused each evening to be placed near it, or on small red ants which I tempted near its water-dish with sugar, very probably also on the cockroaches which came to the same bait.

It was a most troublesome animal to keep; for crippled, awkward and slow as the manis is in walking with its back arched and, as Jerdon says, the forefeet with their anterior surface bent over and brought into contact with the ground, it can burrow with great rapidity by digging the earth^{out} with the powerful foretoes and by shutting up the burrow thus made behind it with the hind feet.

I never could persuade my servants who were in great dread of it, notwithstanding that they allowed it was toothless, that the animal was not venomous.

Since writing the above notes I have found the following remarks in the "Naturalists' voyage round the World" by Darwin, who although he refers to varieties of the South American cousins

of this family the armadilloes "*Dasypus minutus*" or " and the "*apar*" may perhaps be quoted in corroboration of what I have just said regarding the means of self-defence and the burrowing powers of the Indian pangolins. Of the "*apar*," commonly called "*mataco*," Darwin says:—" It has the power " of rolling itself into a perfect sphere, like one kind of English " wood-louse. In this state it is safe from the attack of dogs ; " for the dog not being able to take the whole in his mouth, " tries to bite one side, and the ball slips away. The smooth " hard covering of the *mataco* offers a better defence than the " sharp spines of the hedge-log." Of the *Dasypus minutus* or "*pichy*, Darwin writes :—" In the course of a day's ride, near " Bahia Blanca, several were generally met with. The instant " one was perceived, it was necessary in order to catch it, almost " to tumble off one's horse ; for in soft soil the animal burrowed " so quickly that its hinder quarters would almost disappear " before one could alight."

Another instance, if indeed any example be required, of how wonderfully the Creator has adapted the means of defence of each of his creatures to its habits and conformation. Even the toothless and awkward-looking manis, although incapable of damaging any living thing larger than a small insect, is proof against the attacks of any animal at all likely to molest it.

I own that I have never been struck with the resemblance of the manis to a fish, mentioned at page 317 of Jerdon, who says, that in China and the South of India the animal is called the " hill " or " jungle-carp," but a brother sportsman, who had never heard of this, pointed it out to me in almost the same words.

At Bellary I had a manis in captivity for several weeks and fully intended to have sent it to the Regent's Park. It was certainly one of the most interesting, although the most troublesome animal ever in my possession. Shut up in a corner of a verandah it burrowed in one night through a stone flooring

strongly fixed in mortar, and having hit on some small stone to dislodge in order to effect an entrance, ran a tunnel for several feet underneath granite slabs. Having probably mistaken its way it got under a large stone close to the house foundation, likewise of stone, which either stayed further progress for a time (it could easily have turned in another direction) or seemed so secure a shelter, that it coiled itself up. It was then put into a more safe place, walled and with stone flooring proof against even the claws and fore-paws of a pangolin, here for several days it was perfectly secure, unfortunately however, an old rafter, which was likewise intended for a museum, having been perforated in a marvellous manner by carpenter bees, the greatest pests of Bellary, was, by a native, carelessly placed in a slanting position near a corner, up this it must have swarmed, claws aided by the wonderful prehensile tail, until it got to the top of the wall about seven feet high, whence making itself into a ball it rolled over on ground sufficiently hard and free from dust not to leave a trace behind, it was sought for every where but in vain.

It slept all day, but after dusk and all night was very restless, making a constant and troublesome rattle as it scuttled about its prison in unwearied efforts to escape. Whether it fed then no one could ever discover, but it had various insects to choose a supper from. About dusk I often carried it into the garden and let it run where it liked, having however to keep a keen watch for on soft ground and if it thought it had escaped from observation it would invariably try to burrow. Surely Darwin must delight in this marvellous link between beast, bird and fish. Mammal we know it is, fish it is like in scales and smell if not in other ways, but in the dusk its resemblance to a grey game bird with a long tail, a hen pheasant let me say, with the tail of a cock dragging along the ground, was very striking and quite sufficient to make any one who might have

come on it by chance in its freedom suppose he had caught sight of some running bird, not that the pace of a pangolin ever could be fast but that it looked like such a bird creeping along close to the ground and attempting to escape observation.

When thus at liberty it always made every effort to evade sight or pursuit, but in a room after night-fall if one only kept quiet it is impossible to exaggerate the total and astounding absence of fear displayed by the animal or rather the cool and complete way in which it ignored the presence of man. for without the least hesitation, it would walk up and over me apparently quite unconscious that I was not part of my chair up which, or by my legs, it would swarm, holding on, meanwhile, by its awful bear-like claws in a manner very trying to garments and nerves and most humiliating withal; for, without doing me the compliment of even acknowledging my presence, it would go over my shoulders, peer into my face, let itself down my back on to the chair and so to the floor and repeat the same performances again and again, in fact whenever it found me in its way.

At page 233 of the Field Quarterly Magazine for 1871 there is an account of a new Ant-eater the *Tamoudua Tetraclactyla* from Brazil which on its arrival in the Zoological Gardens displayed a somewhat similar want of fear. Is this an instance of very imperfect organization?

The loss of my interesting captive, pet it could not be termed, was a serious one for it would have been much prized in the Zoological Gardens.

